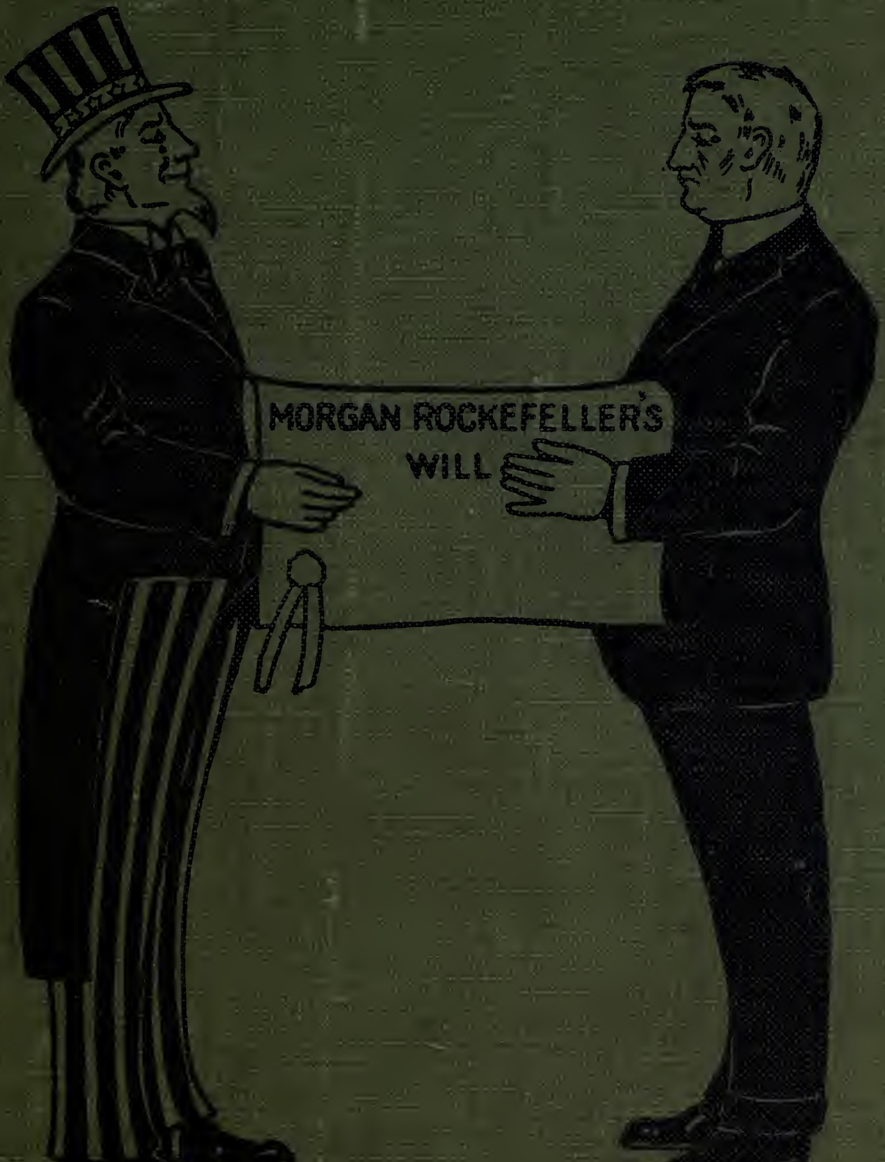
MORGAN ROCKEFELLER'S
WILL

By FRANCIS H. CLARKE

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Morgan Rockefeller's Will

A Romance of 1991=2

By Francis H. Clarke

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"Man is born free, but everywhere enslaved."
—*Rousseau.*

"The State—I am the State." —*Louis xiv.*

PREFACE.

The author of this book presents it to the public in the belief that it contains a message which it is proper for its readers to receive and consider. It is not pretended that the message is entirely new. Only the form in which it appears may be thought by some to be unique, and the author hopes it will give offense to none. He does not presume to criticise any one or any set of men, for he has no doubt that all are responsible in a very large measure for each member of the human family. His only hope is that his work will aid the reader to acquire a better understanding of the ancient "Law of Life," which alone is a remedy for human ills.

March 1909.

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CHAPTER I.

THE ESTATE AND THE MAN.

1990!

Morgan Rockefeller had been President of the Standard Oil Company for thirty years.

In order to understand the situation it is necessary to become acquainted with this great historical person.

The founder of his family was John D. Rockefeller from whom he was descended in the seventh generation.

His father was Aldrich Rockefeller and his mother was a Morgan.

It is interesting to note the stages by which society developed this summit of power and wealth—Morgan Rockefeller.

John D's estate was valued at one billion.

John D. Jr. left ten billion.

John D. 3rd left thirty billion.

John D. 4th married a descendent of Weyerhauser the lumber king and administered the two estates so wisely that in less than ten years he left an estate of one hundred and sixty billion.

Aldrich Rockefeller was a genius. He organized the Merger and when he died in 1960 the complete socialization of ecomonic America was practically effected.

But after Philip came Alexander.

After Aldrich came Morgan.

This marvel of energy and resource was thirty when he succeeded to his estate.

In 1990 he was sixty.

As the owner of all the capital stock of Standard Oil Company—except ten shares of a par value of one dollar each—he had more power, personal, financial, and political than any mortal ever had before.

No tyrant or despot, Czar, Emperor, King or Dictator ever had so much power as he.

All wealth was his.

Therefore he could do as he pleased.

His land, his mines, his forests, his streams, his springs, his factories, his foundries, his shops, his stores, his railroads, his ships, his theaters, and his everything—were at the disposal of his people, his workmen and workwomen, so long as they obeyed his will.

Morgan Rockefeller had no superior on earth.

All political officers were his creatures.

All religious heads bowed with equal submission to their earthly and heavenly masters.

All educators accepted as the indisputable basis of all education the divinity of vested rights as represented by Morgan Rockefeller.

There have been greater despots and worse tyrants than the Roman Nero, but Nero's name stands for all that is not too bad to be printed. It is possible for a political or military despot like him to descend to almost inconceivable depths of degradation.

Morgan Rockefeller was neither a political nor a military tyrant.

It was not possible for him to greatly misuse his power, vast as it was, because to misuse it was to disturb and weaken the system which produced it.

He was simply a business proposition.

He found his estate made up of certain facts, figures, things and persons.

He developed no theories.

When he found a force he harnessed it.

When he saw a productive area he made it produce.

When he discovered mankind he divided it into producers and consumers.

They were his producers and his consumers.

They could not escape it.

If a man wanted food Rockefeller furnished it.

If he wanted clothing Rockefeller made it.

If he wanted medicine Rockefeller provided it.

He was the universal landlord and the universal undertaker.

But to get what he wanted a man must have money.

To get money he must work for somebody who had it.

Nobody had it but Rockefeller, so all men worked for Rockefeller, and received his money and bought back what they made from him and paid his money for it. Rockefeller regulated the prices of all things.

CHAPTER II.

THE MAN AND THE ESTATE.

Morgan Rockefeller, the business proposition, the Merger of Humanity, the corporate uncrowned King, the All in One, was not exactly like his ancestors.

He was, indeed, so unlike them as to be a freak.

At sixty he had done through business all that Alexander had done by war. There was nothing more to do except to improve his system.

But at sixty he felt tired.

He began to consider the object of his strenuous work.

He had never married and had neither wife nor children to strive for. In fact he had no heirs except a niece who had no interest in him and in whom he felt no interest. He thought of her when he made his will, but it seemed absurd to put on her feminine shoulders the burden of the vast Standard Oil system.

As a business proposition he created an aristocracy. But it was an aristocracy of merit. Claims of blood and money were altogether eliminated.

This is the way the aristocracy was distinguished. The Standard Oil Company had ten directors. They were the most expert, the brainiest and keenest business diplomats whom the system had developed. The Standard Oil did no business directly, but held the stock of many thousand corporations which did the business.

Every corporation represented the organization of some interest and the boards of directors were composed of men who occupied the highest stations in social and refined life.

At sixty Morgan Rockefeller turned his attention to politics. But he shortly discovered that this afforded him no diversion. Politics was nothing more than the art of hunting a place in the government.

Government was the creature of business.

It was instituted because the industrial system required it to do police duty.

It was merely a machine made to serve the ends of industry.

In all ages the industrial system in force made such government as it wanted.

So when feudal lords wanted a government suitable to their needs they made a king.

When the church needed protection for physical incomes kingship was invested with divinity.

In a competitive business age an industrial republic demanded a democratic government to protect individual interests and created the republican form and gave it a republican head.

In his time Morgan Rockefeller saw no need of feudal or republican systems.

He was strong enough as an industrial power to dictate all laws and enforce them. Indeed, in his monopolistic merger the severest punishment which could be inflicted was to discharge the wrongdoer. Men lived in mortal dread of losing their positions. To be stricken off the pay rolls of the universal bookkeeper meant starvation. There was but one employer and there were no longer any individual workers, except in the waste lands where gold was to be found in alluvial or placer deposits.

Many men who had not yet taken positions with the Merger—men of the old school—and men who had lost positions, were, some of them, employed in the goldfields—for gold was still money.

Such was the situation and such was Morgan Rockefeller in 1990 when our story begins.

CHAPTER III.

A DIRECTOR IN THE ESTATE.

Alden Lowell of Boston was one of the directors of the New England Furniture Manufacturing Company. As such he was regarded as a person of importance although his interest in the company was limited to one share of its capital stock, par value one dollar. His salary, however, was large enough to enable him to maintain a respectable state, suitable to the station which Rockefeller's directors occupied. Lowell was a young man, unmarried, son of Exmore Lowell who had figured as one of Rockefeller's most efficient lieutenants in New England. He owed his position to the distinction of his father and the desire of Mr. Rockefeller to show his appreciation of Exmore Lowell's unselfish devotion to his service through many years.

Director Lowell was not a practical furniture manufacturer, but he was, as all conceded, sound in his judgment of business, and, although not more than twenty-five years old was highly valued as a counselor. One of the advantages of his position was that he enjoyed much leisure, for while his duties were exacting, they required his attention for only two or three hours during the day. Being of a studious turn of mind and devoted to scientific research he engaged in a course of study and a series of experiments which finally became of absorbing interest.

When a boy Alden had accompanied his father on a journey through the Australian desert. The purpose of the journey was to enable the father to observe the atmospheric conditions, witness the phenomena which are presented there perhaps more frequently than any where else, in the various forms of mirage and make copious notes of what he observed. Exmore had a belief that if he could obtain a sufficient understanding of mirage conditions, he could provide a machine which would excel the most extravagant claims of clairvoyancy or of what the spiritualists call "materialization," repeating scenes as they occurred far from the place of their enactment.

The father died, but the son was as zealous in the quest as he and the genius of the latter was intensified by the feeling that the father's untimely demise placed upon him the double duty of living his own life and living out, also, the life of the father. Therefore most of Director Lowell's time was spent in perfecting an invention which he called the "Mirage Reflector" and incidently most of his money was spent in the same way.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ESTATE STRIKES.

One day in 1990 the young Director received a notice from the president of the company citing him to appear before the Board of which he was a member at three o'clock p. m. on the following day and answer certain charges which had been preferred against him.

"If the charges against you are true" continued the notice, "you will be deposed and stricken from the pay rolls."

Lowell was greatly surprised and not a little agitated. He did not, however, feel any guilt in the matter. Probably the system had no more faithful servitor than he, but he was conscious of having offended technically against the law of his company in a manner which he had supposed to be entirely concealed. He could hardly credit even with the menacing summons inh is hands that his one offence was known. Yet in no other respect would he believe he was under suspicion, for he was otherwise above suspicion.

Hoping the charges against him might prove to be frivolous and far from the facts which he knew and feared, he presented himself at the hour designated and found the full Board present awaiting his advent. Evidently the members did not regard the occasion as serious and Lowell was received with the usual cordial greetings which were the manifestations of his popularity. He lost no time, however, in calling for his indictment. When it was placed before him he read it eagerly but it was easy to see that he was greatly disappointed and depressed at what he read.

"This indictment," said he, addressing the President, "is very indefinite. It charges me with conspiring with others to disturb the peace and good order of society by organizing and maintaining a fraternal association known as the Reapers of the World. It is signed by a man named Hughes whom I do not know and of whom I have never heard. How can I be expected to answer such a charge."

"Mr. Lowell," said the President, smiling knowingly at the young man, "that charge is only serious if it is true and its truth or falsity will be determined by yourself. You know Mr. Rockefeller regards labor unions, fraternal orders and voluntary associations as enemies to his rule. His ancestors were much annoyed by labor unions. They, however, were easily suppressed. When the perfected Merger was established these fraternal associations proved to be vexatious and dangerous beyond toleration. No sooner was one form eradicated than another form sprang into life and President Rockefeller has no patience with them. But as a Director you are entitled to certain privileges. Your simple denial is all the rule requires and it will be sufficient to exonerate you."

So saying the President placed a printed form of denial on the table in front of which stood the indicted Director and with his finger indicated where the latter should sign.

"I do not feel inclined to sign such a denial," declared Lowell after a pause. "Whether true or false, is it not absurd that one should be thus restrained from exercising the right of association which the political constitution guarantees him? Are we men and submit to be treated as slaves?"

The President, an old man who had spent his long life in the department of which he was the head, straightened himself up and looked at the speaker in amazement. The other directors who had been disposed to regard the arraingment as a joke at the expense of the accused now watched the young man with astonishment and the aged President turned pale at this unexpected turn affairs had taken.

"What!" exclaimed the latter recovering from the shock of the event—"Sir, you do not—you cannot mean to imperil your present position and your future welfare and security by so rash a defiance. Why! sir, it took me thirty years of hard work to reach the station of director which you occupy at twenty-five. Your contract with this company is such that if you refuse to sign that denial you forfeit, not only this position—this high and honorable position—but every position. You will leave this room self beggared, an economic suicide, an outcast."

He placed his hand sympathetically on Lowell's arm and his look of pain yielded to one of compassion.

"Sign it, my boy, sign it," he urged pleadingly.

Director Lowell was regarded as a strong personality. He was recognized as a force beyond his years and was greatly admired by his companions who expected him to become a man of great note.

These men who were his business associates were all his friends and were extremely solicitous that his course be straight up to glory without fault or defect.

The youth and beauty of the accused—the solicitude of the venerable President and the thought which suddenly flashed into all minds that to be stricken from Rockefeller's payrolls meant abject, hopeless bankruptcy, and perhaps worse, converted an otherwise commonplace scene into one of tragic meaning.

After a few seconds of meditation Lowell lifted his eyes from the table and looked into the face of the President.

"I am sorry" he said, "but I cannot bring my mind to comply with your request. I know you intend it for my welfare, but it is impossible. This curtailment of personal liberty by President Rockefeller is unbearable. Why should he enter into the private and unimportant details of one's life and seek to regulate them? My refusal to sign is not an admission that I am a member of a fraternal society, but is made because I am unwilling, in free America, to submit to such a limitation. I have never considered it before, Mr. President, but now it is made an issue with me I am unable to suppress my Americanism. I know what it means. I am at issue with a power which crushes. Perhaps I may escape the dire consequences which you anticipate for me and perhaps not, but I have stated my position and I will not recede from it. Neither will I resign," he added.

The President picked up the oath of denial and with a gesture of impatience and dsepair seated himself at the table. "Very well," he exclaimed desperately, "you have none to blame but yourself."

Rapping loudly on the table with his gavel he then called the directors to order and while Lowell continued standing, stated the case again.

"Your duty is plain, hentlemen. However much we may regret the stand Director Lowell has taken and the fact that he persists in his fault, his refusal to deny his complicity as charged, must be regarded as a confession and he cannot escape punishment."

A motion was made to declare the position of director occupied by Alden Lowell vacant and was carried unanimously.

"This action" declared the President coldly "means that although you have a right of appeal that you are now expelled from this Board and can only be restored by the action of President Morgan Rockefeller himself. You are no longer entitled to be present at any of our meeetings."

"I shall not appeal," replied Lowell bowing respectfully, as he left the room.

CHAPTER V.

THE OUTCAST.

Boston, in 1990 was a tangle of streets and a tumble of buildings as in the old days of the former century. Some suggestions of the new and artistic Boston of today were manifested in the huge department stores constructed along the well known lines of Rockefeller architecture.

There were landmarks two centuries old which Boston sentiment would not permit to be disturbed.

The Standard Oil Building, in which were the headquarters of the Merger for Massachusetts, was the most massive structure in the modern city.

When Lowell, minus his title "Director" and without place in the system, left the office of the company on that fateful day, he understood but did not realize the precariousness of his position. As he passed into the street, shorn of authority and cast out, so to speak, he did not know whether to feel crushed or not. He had clearly enough represented to himself the extreme danger which confronted him, but he was so habituated to the security which he had always enjoyed, that confidence did not at once forsake him.

He knew what an outcast was and even contemplated the possibility of becoming one. But to behold such a fate afar off and to actually experience it, are very different things. There were, in those days, many outcasts in Boston who were more or less dependent on charity—the charity of Standard's employes. They were, however, regarded as objects of either pity or aversion according as they were harmless or vicious. Commercially they were tolerated because of the commandment "Thou shalt not kill." Politically they were permitted to vote at elections, but although their votes were religiously counted it was of no importance to the Merger how they were cast as all candidates were primarily dictated by it. Probably this outcast element numbered less than fifteen per cent of Boston's population, and if they followed any other occupation than professional beggary or crime, it was something far beneath the dignity of the Merger. Along legitimate lines Standard disdained nothing.

Even the roasting of chestnuts was standardized.

In the economic system of the Rockefeller creation there were no saloons. Its departmetn stores included a drug department where distilled liquors were sold only as drugs. The Rockefellers all contended that as a commercial proposition, healthy appetites and sober minds must prove far more profitable than diseased inebriates without appetites.

It was from such a system that Lowell had just been thrust.

It was into such a nondescript mass that Lowell presently realized he had been summarily hurled.

The great question "What to do?" pressed vitally and viciously for an answer.

These outcasts, some of them, were able to pick up a few pennies here and there by shining shoes, peddling books, selling lemonade or doing odd jobs as porters. Criminally disposed persons continued to prey upon and annoy the industrious and "regular" classes and were subjected to and punished by the laws designed for their suppression. These were all outcasts and as such were regarded by the police as likely, by virtue of their desperate position economically, to become enemies of or pests within the social order.

The outlook was certainly discouraging for Lowell. As he moved on through the crowded thoroughfare his mind, which had accepted the judgment of his associates with apparent complacency, began to waver. The problem would have presented only a pleasant exercise and the difficulty would have seemed like an exciting adventure, if every step he took, every scene he beheld, every street, building, sign and human face did not spell "doom" for him.

He had no destination. Involuntarily and unconsciously he strayed into the beautiful public gardens. It was a perfect day and nature was glorious with the delights of Spring. But the bright green lawns, the budding flowers and the singing birds were all unnoticed. Who could think of nature, however delightful, in the presence of disgrace. Who could enjoy the songs and sights of Spring, however entrancing, if an economic vice were pinching life out of every hope. The more he considered his predicament the more desperate it seemed. He was like all men except the Master, without property and had only enough funds to support him two or three months at the most. He was without resources, because resources were all controlled by the system and the system had been, by him, mortally offended. He had no way of obtaining an income. The more he deliberated the more useless deliberation seemed to be. His condition was desperate indeed.

At last he turned his steps homeward—homeward to the Standard Junior Hotel in which he had lived now for several years. He almost ran and a number of people whom he jostled in the crowded streets, stopped and looked after him as after a madman.

When he reached his hotel the clerk handed him a letter which he opened and read immediately. "Good" he exclaimed to himself when he had finished "I had entirely forgotten. There lies my hope and I will surely be there."

CHAPTER VI.

THE REAPERS OF THE WORLD.

The Reverend William Fuller occupied rooms on Court Street in the heart of the City of Boston. In former years the street was a legal center and the upper rooms used as lawyers' offices.

The little dingy outer room of Mr. Fuller's suite was that evening the scene of a devout gathering. The lights were dim and the pastor and his people spoke very low. They came together for prayer and spiritual communion. Such, at least, would be the opinion of a stranger if any should chance to enter. But there were not more than eight, mostly ladies, who in somber dress with serious and thoughtful faces listened to their reverend leader or bowed their heads in prayer.

One of Standard's large detective force had been watching the people as they entered Rev. Mr. Fuller's apartments. Finally it occurred to him that he would step in himself. So he left the shadow of Court Square and crossing Court Street went into the little prayer meeting. Hughes, the detective was surprised to find so few in the room for he could have taken an oath that he had counted one hundred persons going through that particular door and he had expected to find quite a crowded meeting. He went in and sat down, for his curiosity was aroused and he decided to watch. As he sat down one of the worshipers arose, and retired to the anteroom so that the number in the little room remained the same.

Hughes noticed Alden Lowell, until that morning a Director of the New England Furniture Manufacturing Company, come quietly in and sit down. He also noticed that he did not remain seated long, but soon arose and went to one of the side doors which he opened and passed through. Lowell was known to most Bostonians as the son of Exmore Lowell who was, in his lifetime, one of New England's most prominent men. Hughes, who was aware that Alden had been that day deposed and who, as one of the ferrets of the Rockefeller system, already classed him with the outcasts and dangerous to the social order, became suspicious. He went to the door through which Alden had passed and tried it. But it did not yield to his pressure. He returned and seated himself. As for those engaged in the devotional exercises they did not look to the right or left but seemed to be lost in religious meditation.

What had become of Alden?

The man who rose and passed out as Hughes entered the meeting, had in fact recognized the visitor and stepped out to warn all who might come, that a spy was among them. When Alden arrived he was advised to pass in and sit down, then, after a few minutes to join the company within. As Hughes vaguely suspected, the prayer meeting was a blind.

When Alden left the prayer meeting he found himself alone in a small room. It was without lights and he groped his way across to another door. Here he pressed a hidden button twice and, thereupon, a little aperture just large enough to admit his hand was opened in the door. He thrust his hand through and, the person in charge being apparently satisfied, the door was opened and he was admitted. The door was closed after him, but nobody appeared to greet him. There were white masks and white robes hanging on the wall. He took one of each and covering his face with the mask and donning the robe, went to another room and opening an aperture in that, thrust his hand through as before. Again the door opened and he entered a dark room, stopping just inside the portal. Thereupon a voice spoke in evidently disguised tones, as follows:

"Alden Lowell, repeat after me:

"I, Alden Lowell, swear on my honor as a Reaper of the World that I will never repeat, except in a hall of the Reapers of the World, anything which I hear or read or say in this hall tonight; I further agree to submit to that rule of the order which says, 'Whoever, having become a member of the Reapers of the World shall sue said order or cause the same to be sued, in any court of law, or who shall make or cause to be made any complaint against it which shall be designed or intended to bring it to the notice of the Government of any city or state or of the Federal Government or the military authorities, so that any proceeding shall be instituted against it with a view to depriving it of its property, disbanding it, or punishing its members, shall be deemed a traitor to the order and shall be delivered over to the Avengers to be dealt with as they shall deem best.' "

This oath having been taken, the voice thereupon then continued:

"The Avengers will now step forward and repeat the oath of vengance."

Thereupon six masked figures stepped forward and ranging themselves in front of Alden chanted the oath as follows:

"We, the Avengers, love one another and love all our brethren, but the enemy of love is the traitor. It is only against such that our vengeance shall be wreaked. We swear that if any man, having become a member of the Reapers of the World, shall sue the order in the courts or shall seek its injury by placing it at the mercy of the authorities, such person shall be, by us, destroyed. Traitors shall not live."

This Avengers' oath was chanted in a slow measured and almost weirdly impressive tone and in perfect unison. Immediately on its conclusion the lights went out and the room became dark again. When, in three minutes the lights were again turned on, the assembled people, men and women, had removed the white robes and masks and fallen back to the rear and sides of the hall. Not one knew the part the others had played in the ceremony of opening.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LADY HARVESTER.

The Hall of the Reapers of the World was crowded to its greatest capacity. In fact it was not a hall, but two rooms which opened into each other. There were more than a hundred men and women present.

The presiding officer was a woman.

She was robed in white, and around her head was a gold band above which a star glistened.

In her hand she held a sickle-shaped gavel.

The routine business was taken up first and disposed of.

It was noted by Alden who was new to the order, and who was therefore an interested observer, that one of the reports offered showed that the order in the nation contained some five thousand members, most of whom still occupied positions in the system.

The same report showed that the organization had been in existence four years. Each member paid one dollar per month into what was called "The Trust Fund" and fifty cents into the expense fund.

The trust fund now amounted to one hundred thousand dollars and was increased in the last month by five thousand dollars.

The lady who presided was a Miss Channing and was addressed as "Lady Harvester" by those who desired recognition from that officer.

While not very tall she was a little above medium height. She was graceful, quick, firm and resourceful. Her voice was soft and low as she spoke, and had a wonderful cadence that held the attention and fascinated the listener. Her words were apt and picturesque. She presided with the dignity of a queen.

"The Order of the Reapers of the World," she said when the report mentioned was finished, "is entitled to congratulations.

"It has increased its membership in spite of drastic prohibitory legislation, by more than two thousand since a year ago.

"We have reason to expect it to double during the coming year.

"Think, Reapers, what marvels can be accomplished by combined effort.

"The Reapers of the World do not design to disturb society.

"They do not intend to change the system.

"They have no fight against Morgan Rockefeller, the Standard Oil Company or the methods by which they have achieved results.

"Once, in times past, back in 1908 for instance, the several departments of industry were owned by certain individuals. John D. Rockefeller was then the head of that particular industry which controlled the production and distribution of oil. But what did Rockefeller get out of it? One man's portion only! He could not eat more than one man's portion. He could wear only one suit of clothes at a time. He occupied but one bed, one house, one man's space. Wealth might multiply around him, but capacity and importance never became enlarged except by fiction.

"What did this vast wealth bring him? Simply burdens. He merely kept the books for the industry he represented and his great distinction was that he provided a system of bookkeeping which excelled all others. Carnegie did the same for the iron industry. Havemeyer and Spreckles for sugar, Weyerhauser and a few others for lumber, F. H. Peavy & Company for wheat and Harriman for the railroads. The legerdemain of bookkeeping, better bookkeeping than the smaller men used, enabled these several men to figure the masses out of the control. Finally they figured against one another. The Rockefellers were the best bookkeepers and hence are now keeping the books for all America. It is the survival of the fittest.

"But one thing thou lackest, O Rockefeller! Thou lackest Brotherly Love!

"The growing trusts seemed evil. They grew fat on interest, rent and profits. Had mankind known the truth, they would have known that if God permitted a thing to exist which appeared evil, He also provided a complete remedy, close at hand, for that evil. When the remedy was applied the evil ceased.

"By carefully searching history we shall find that in 1908 the organizations of capital which challenged attention, developed side by side with massive, wonderful organizations of men and women who were not capitalists. Labor was organized into unions. They were merely militant forces. Their mission was to compel capital to permit them to share in the three evils, interest, rent and profits. Fraternal associations were organized. In 1908 most of the people were members of one or two of the fraternal orders then existing. But the fraternal orders did not understand their own greatness and their members timidly advanced with them into business. They were the greatest collectors of capital the world ever saw. They were the greatest and most honorable distributors of capital the system ever developed.

"At the time when the Northern Securities Company was formed eighty seven years ago the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, the Modern Woodmen of America and the Ancient Order of United Workmen numbered from half a million to a million members each.

"The Northern Securities Company held the majority of the capital stock of three great railroad companies, the Northern Pacific, the Great Northern and the Burlington.

"But the holding company controlled the selection of their directors.

"It also collected the dividends due on the stock it held.

"It simplified book keeping.

"It applied a scientific, impersonal system to the absorption of the rent, profits and interest which might be received by the railroad companies.

"It relieved the active companies of certain vexations, but did not interfere with their practical work.

"If the fifteen million voters of America had been formed into a fraternal order at that time and as such had owned the stock of the three companies in the place of the Northern Securities Company, no objection could have been made to their fraternal merger.

"What would it have meant?

"Suppose the fifteen million had paid a dollar each into a trust fund every month, as we are doing.

"In a month they would have accumulated fifteen million dollars.

"In two months it would have been thirty million dollars.

"In a year it would have been one hundred and eighty million dollars.

"In ten years it would have been one billion eight hundred million dollars.

"At no period in American history has so much money as one billion eight hundred million dollars been in actual circulation.

"Thus, such a fraternal association would have been in complete control of one of the necessary parts of the machinery of commercial society, and all of that machinery would be subject to its action.

"Fraternal organizations were timid. They feared to become revolutionary. They declined to enlarge their purpose beyond the temporary relief of their members against sickness and death.

"They surrendered the power of economic revolution to the Rockefellers and these latter became the most successful revolutionists the world has ever seen. What the Rockefellers accomplished, namely, the economic conquest of the nation by correct and simple bookkeeping, carefully accounting for the rent, profits and interest of the system, might have been accomplished in the same way by a fraternal order. Rent, profits and interest, the unfair distribution of which renders society unequal and unjust, could have been turned as dividends on stock, into a fraternal treasury instead of an autocratic purse, and the just division of these three surplus accumulations among the fraternal members, would have been a solution of economic evils.

"What would Jesus propose in such a social state?

"Would he not have said that this was scientific brotherly love? Would he not have declared that Caesar should have only a brother's part and that what part was Caesar's as a brother's, should be rendered unto him?

"It is not too late for us to induce the great body of the one hundred and eighty million people of the United States to enter our order, the Reapers of the World, and we shall be able to develop Christ's spirit in the economic system, so that it shall not be said as it can be said to President Rockefeller, one thing thou lackest. Let us solve this problem on the basis of brotherly love. Again, I congratulate you on the growth of our order."

Alden, in common with the others present, listened to these remarks of the Lady Harvester, with delight. She was so young, so beautiful and at the same time so intelligent, that with the star glistening above her forehead and the white robe of her office adding to her naturally regal bearing, she seemed to him as one descended from above to bring again to earth the divine message of fraternal love. He could not forbear to say, when the presiding officer seated herself, that the bright star which glistened in her helmet, representing the star of Bethlehem, might still be the guiding star of mankind. "This remedy" he said "is Christ's remedy."

"It is two thousand years old. But men have persisted in misapplying it. They want us to believe that it belongs to heaven, not to earth. They assure us that it is not practical.

"I say that it is the only thing in this complex system, this confusion of ideas, this false theory of right and wrong, that is practical.

"All else leads to disaster.

"Henceforth I shall devote my life to fraternal bookkeeping as proposed by this order, against autocratic bookkeeping as proposed and enforced by Morgan Rockefeller and the Standard Oil Company. But I honor Rockefeller and his company for the method which they have introduced, while I fall at the feet of Christ and reverence and adore that divine spirit which has given the world its only hope of salvation."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ESTATE'S FERRET.

The Reapers transacted much business that evening. When at last the meeting adjourned the prayer meeting adjourned, too. Dectective Hughes remained to the end.

The Rev. Mr. Fuller was well aware of Hughes' presence. He saw no way, however, to avoid it and, as there was but one exit for the lodge, he decided to resort to a ruse to throw the detective off the scent.

He did not know that Hughes was a detective but because he was a stranger and so under suspicion, the pastor decided on his course. He recalled the fact that only one member, Alden Lowell, had entered the inner rooms since Hughes came in. Accordingly when the little electric bell on his desk announced to the initiated that the lodge meeting was over, he quickly entered the inner room and notified the members that a stranger was suspiciously watchful in the chapel.

Having put his brethren on their guard and induced them, except Lowell, to delay their appearance in the chapel, he and Lowell came out together and the pastor engaged Hughes in conversation and prepared to close the place. Hughes took the hint to depart, and left, but arriving in the street, instead of going his way as the pastor supposed, concealed himself in an alley where he could continue his investigations without being observed.

In twos and fours the Reapers left their rendezvous in such manner as they supposed would attract the least possible attention.

Lowell waited for Miss Channing, who was a zealous devotee of the order to which she belonged, and as its chieftainess was in demand by many and surrounded by admiring throngs. She was the last to say "good night" to the Reverend Mr. Fuller and then joining her escort, together they took the subway car to Watertown where Miss Channing resided.

Unobserved by them the detective quietly seated himself where he could hear their conversation.

"You seem to be very serious tonight, Mr. Lowell," remarked the young lady.

"Do I?" said he. "Perhaps I have reason enough to be" he continued. "Today I ceased to be a Director of the Standard System."

The young lady gave him a half frightened look. If in 1910 a young man had said to his lady love that he had that day assaulted and choked his employer, she would not have been more startled. If he had told her he had lost all his fortune and was now penniless the girl of 1910 would have been inclined to pledge her love anew in the firm belief that opportunities to succeed were still at their disposal.

But to lose fortune, honor, position and prospects —that was Lowell's predicament. Miss Channing did not shrink from him. Perhaps she had never regarded him in the light of a suitor and perhaps she was not as prudent and wise as her predecessors of a former century.

"Why, Mr. Lowell!" is all she could think of to say.

"Yes," continued Lowell. "I am cast out —cashiered—expelled, sent like the lepers of old Jerusalem to live with the dead, among the tombs, so to speak. Do you not realize how loathesome I have become?"

The young lady looked pityingly at her companion.

"Was it because you have been discovered? Do they know you are a member of our order?" she asked.

"Even so," replied he with an expression of desperate resignation as his eyes met hers. "I did not admit that I was a member. The company could not punish me for punishment does not belong to it—but should it some day become one with the government I suppose it will hang such traitors as I am." The last words were spoken very bitterly.

"Is it not already one with the government?" she argued. "Is it not worse than that? The government is its creature. But the government can not inflict, in these days, such a punishment as this company inflicts. Public opinion would never permit the government to sentence even the most hardened criminal to death by starvation. Yet the company can do that practically and effectively."

The conversation was discouraging and the young lady saw the look of despair which came over his face.

"Somehow I have no fear for your future in spite of the situation, Mr. Lowell," she said; "but have you no plans?"

Lowell had no plans.

"I have a little money," said he. "Enough to last me a few months if I have no unusual expense. I hardly know what to do when that is gone. It occurred to me that I might go to Colorado or Alaska and search for gold."

"Or perhaps we might make you a paid lecturer of our order. It is almost large enough to warrant such a department," suggested Miss Channing.

"I have not dared to think of any position which would make me dependent on the order." Lowell paused as if revolving the subject in his mind. "I would like to have you advise me on another matter that I have been considering. You know I have been at work on an instrument which I call a mirage reflector."

Miss Channing had been interested for some time in the experiment which Mr. Lowell had explained to her and had witnessed some of his trials. She was not apprised as to the extent of his success.

"It now occurs to me," she said, "that you could spend some time during the next few months perfecting your invention. I thought when I saw it some weeks ago that you were near success. Of course I know little about so abstruse a subject but I think you can make a great name for yourself if you can work your idea out thoroughly. You ought to offer it to Morgan Rockefeller personally."

"That is just what I was intending to ask your opinion about," returned Lowell. "I have completed the instrument so that now we are sure that it will be a success. I can do wonders with it now and by simply invoking the principle of the mirage, can, in the proper atmospheric conditions, reproduce in the narrow limits of my chamber, any scene in the world. I thought our order might want it, but of course it is not financially strong enough to use it now. Besides it would have to deal with Standard and that is out of the question. If I offer it to Standard it will be another instrumentality of concentration for it will make all the world subject to its observation at a moment's notice. Nothing can escape it. To Omnipotence will be added Omniscience."

Miss Channing had listened in astonishment to this statement. She believed it was absolutely true, for she had witnessed enough of the young man's experiments to be able to anticipate something of his expectations.

"Still, Mr. Lowell," she said, "I think you had best offer your invention to Standard. You must take care of yourself and you ought to go to St. Louis and see Mr. Rockefeller personally. Your father's great influence with him and the profound friendship the President had for him will find a place for you, especially if you can bring a valuable invention like the reflector to him."

Just then the train stopped at Watertown. As the two left the car a small man brushed by them and gazed into the young lady's face which the radium light of the station lighted up. A look of surprise came into the little man's eyes. Lowell noticed the movement and scowled at the intruder angrily but the latter stepped back and gave no further offense.

A short time after, when Lowell returned to the station alone the little man was still there. He had carefully marked in his memory the hotel where the young lady resided. He stepped up to Lowell as the latter paced the platform waiting for the train and asked what time the next train was due to the city. Lowell answered him shortly, repelling any attempt at closer acquaintance. When the train arrived each found his own place in the car and both returned to their respective homes.

But the detective was elated.

He had made a discovery.

"I will have to befriend that young man", he said to himself. "He is a little grouty now but that is not surprising. I see that his action in quitting his place on the Board was not as foolish as I suspected. Wonder if he knows who that young lady is. Ha, but I am as lucky as Lowell, for I do know who she is. I will guard them both and this man Lowell will know me and lean on me yet."

So the train rolled on to its destination.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TWO PRESIDENTS.

St. Louis had been the capital of the Republic of North America for thirty years. It had become a vast city. Its central location in the imperial valley of the Mississippi had invited the establishment of the general office buildings of the Standard Oil Company. These two would, in themselves, have employed a sufficient number of people to constitute a metropolitan city.

It was admitted the world over to be the most splendid of all capital cities, excelling London, Paris and Berlin in their best days.

The St. Louis of 1990 was not the St. Louis of 1900.

The transformation was an evolution from dingy buildings to magnificent marble palaces and monuments of shining glory.

Here dwelt the president of the greatest republic in form and the president of the greatest corporation in fact, the world had ever seen.

President Adams was the political chief of the nation.

President Rockefeller was the industrial chief.

The industrial chief was the power.

The political chief was the reflection of power.

The latter never did anything without consulting the former.

The word of Rockefeller was law to Adams.

This was no new phase of power, governmental or industrial.

It has always been so.

Washington in his time consulted the business interests and acted as they dictated.

The farmers of the eighteenth century constituted the business interests then.

Whether hydra-headed or single-headed, whether scattered or concentrated, whether managed in a million separate parts by as many individuals or as one great whole in the form of a trust, the Business Interests, have always dominated, directed and determined political acts and conditions.

When President Adams found all interests united in Rockefeller's hands he did neither more nor less than Washington did when he consulted and obeyed that power.

It was no secret that Rockefeller had for thirty years nominated and elected every president of the Republic P,ractically without opposition.

President Adams was considered a strong President.

His courage was unquestioned, for he never feared to put both his person or his reputation to the test or subject them to sacrifice whenever he was assured that President Rockefeller approved.

The people knew this, and were anxious only to learn the opinions of the great industrial master expecting nothing more and nothing less than complete perfunctory compliance on the part of his servant, the political chief.

The two Presidents were devoted friends.

President Adams, like all other people who regarded themselves safe and sane, felt that President Rockefeller's approbation was the highest reward which he could hope to receive.

President Rockefeller regarded the counsel and advice of his learned friend, the chief magistrate, as eminently wise and valuable.

In 1900 this relation which the President of the Republic sustained to the President of the Standard Oil Company would have provoked the popular wrath and invited political destruction. But the spirit of 1990 rose to the enthusiastic recognition of the great truth that political government is and has always been and always must and will be subservient to the economic system.

CHAPTER X.

THE DEATH OF MONEY.

The famous order of the Standard Oil Company dated May 1st, 1990, was intended to be a complete demonetization of gold.

Its purpose was to compel the gold miners of Colorado, Nevada, Utah, South Dakota and Alaska, to abandon their quest for that metal and take service with the Merger.

It recited that certain persons were engaged outside of the company's industries in digging gold and exchanging it for the benefits, pleasures, concessions and commodities, which were at the disposal of the company.

These pursuits were pronounced wasteful and unreasonable and useless to the system.

Gold had no value except for its use in the arts.

As the company was the sole producer and distributor of all values, except gold, the fictitious and false value with which the latter was invested, was delusive and fraudulent.

All employes of the company and its servient corporations were instructed by this order to accept nothing at any company store, theatre, house of amusement or in any department of its activities, except checks issued by the Standard Oil Company for value received by it.

Thenceforth no man who performed any service for the company should receive from the company any other pay than a check in words and figures as follows:

March 10, 1990, A. D.

Deliver to the bearer hereof one dollar's worth of anything which the Standard Oil Company has for sale or rent.

Notice: This company will sell only commodities, amusements and transportation.

STANDARD OIL COMPANY,
Per Morgan Rockefeller,
President.

The order went into effect at once.

The result was that two thirds of its value was squeezed out of gold.

A few weeks after this it developed that the quantity of gold available for the arts so far exceeded the demand that the company declined to pay more than three dollars per ounce for it.

In the gold producing sections the effect was appalling.

Over one hundred thousand families were practically shut off from supplies.

In the great city of Denver the depression was felt much more seriously than in any other city, and excitement ran high.

A revolution was threatened.

Not merely the gold miners, but their numerous friends were involved.

Besides this, many were seduced by the argument that the demonetization of gold and the wreck of the last remaining independent occupation cut off the single avenue of escape from the grasp of Morgan Rockefeller's continental monopoly.

With the exception of the trusted agents of the company, everybody in Denver was bitterly hostile to the order.

Meetings were held in the streets and public squares.

Orators discussed the order with inflammatory fluency.

Men gathered in groups and gesticulated and shouted at one another.

Officers in uniform stood idly by, not venturing or caring to restore order.

It was evident that an outbreak might be expected at any moment.

The people everywhere advocated the seizure and confiscation of Standard's property.

Some wanted immediate action.

The more conservative were deterred by the problem of administration after seizure.

Should the political government undertake to do business?

Should political socialism be established?

There were objections to such a revolution.

The government as constituted was the creature of Rockefeller.

Its officers were his agents.

The constitution limited the powers of government.

It could do no business.

It was not needed for such purpose and was unfit for it.

The administration of the business taken over through revolution would devolve on certain heads, but who would elect those heads, how elect them, when elect them, and by what and whose authority?

Some favored electing a man to whom all the Rockefeller interests should be conveyed through the employment of military force. So habituated had the people become to the "one man power" that many could conceive no other way of operating the industries.

But sentiment did not, on the whole, favor the selection of a substitute for Rockefeller and so the problem did not lose any of its perplexities.

Could a plan be formulated whereby to administer the property after seizure?

If not, seizure would be followed by chaos, anarchy and disaster.

Colorado had a world famous orator.

It was the only state in which the type of popular orator represented by Thomas Masterson still survived.

The Rockefeller system was so exact and worked so effectively elsewhere, that vocal speech was resorted to in the pulpit, the lecture room and the halls of justice, for argument and teaching only. Oratory was fast becoming a lost art.

No man had more influence than Masterson with the irregular and unincorporated people of that state, or of the mining states of the west. It may be said of him that he was the last of the Democrats.

In the city hall, nominally the property of the City of Denver, a great crowd had gathered. Masterson was there, genial, cordial, familiar and courageous.

When he mounted the platform to speak, the assemblage rioted in an excess of boisterous joy which they intended as an ovation.

In him the Democrat spoke.

The theories of Jefferson, recast by that later Democratic political socializer, Bryan, were dimly suggested in the new dress with which custom and fashion had habilitated them.

Proudly he assured them that he was a Democrat; that he believed in the individual method of producing wealth and distributing it; that the days of the individualist, when each person had his separate business, before the Merger had absorbed everything, were halcyon days; that then men were free and in competition had an incentive to strive for wealth, for superior positions, for rewards; that in his opinion the Rockefeller interests should be seized at once and a provisional committee appointed to take charge; that the political machinery should be seized and a new constitution adopted which should provide a new government; that the amount of wealth each person should be permitted to own ought to be limited; that all the property seized by the provisional committee should be confiscated by the new constitutional government and divided equally among all the people of the state; that such division should be made so that the workers in any one department of industry might be able to carry on an effective co-partnership.

The crowd was completely entranced by the vivid picture, which the orator painted in glowing and beautiful words, of that Colorado of 1876 when the Democratic system was active in its simplest and purest form. They saw again in imagination the mountains, valleys and plains occupied by a simple and courageous race; saw those plains gradually reclaimed from the wild state, the mountain slopes to deepen their verdure with their abundance, the valleys to assume the rich heritage of a cultivated Eden. They saw the free man, rough-hewn and mighty in his strength, contending for material things and growing mightier and stronger as he contended. And this was the best state of man "for", said he, "competition makes character."

In the outburst of applause which greeted the orator when he finished his appeal, the voice of one Socialist, at least, was drowned and only the close bystanders heard him cry out:

"Yes, competition made character. It made Shylock and the free-booter. It never made a good man nor a Christian."

The big miner next to the Socialist silenced him with a blow.

Resolutions were adopted providing for the appointment of a provisional committee of three to take possession of Standard's property and organize the new state.

This seemed to have been fully arranged beforehand, for Masterson, Larrabee, and Toy were immediately designated as such committee by the chairman and proceeded to act.

Then began the enthusiasm and the tumult. Masterson was made the head of the committee with the title of general.

Volunteers were called for to assist in the proposed seizure.

While the movement seemed impromptu and voluntary, in fact it had been carefully planned; and a large number of assistants were busy at once with papers to be signed by volunteers.

Before the next morning over twenty thousand had been organized into regiments and companies.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ESTATE'S MILITARY CHAMBER.

While these events were transpiring in Denver, Morgan Rockefeller was in his palatial home on the banks of the Mississippi above the capital city.

He was fully advised of proceedings in Denver.

The country west, south and north of the rebellious city was sparsely settled and it was not possible to learn what the straggling bands of gold miners were doing.

Rockefeller did not underestimate the seriousness of the Denver uprising. It affected other sections sympathetically, but so entirely were those parts under monopolistic control that he apprehended no danger there.

The general of the Army of the Republic of North America, General Edison Grant, was a man of note in two spheres.

He was a commanding general and a great inventor. As an inventor he was known only to the near counsellors of Rockefeller.

His principal device was the Military Chamber.

Here, military power was concentrated.

It was General Grant's belief that all power should be so concentrated, financial, industrial and military, that its full force could be commanded at a moment's notice.

When General Grant called on President Rockefeller at the latter's castle in response to an invitation or command, they repaired to the military Chamber to consider the Denver situation.

A brief description of this chamber is proper.

The four walls were covered with buttons, and each of these buttons contained the name of some American city.

The room was large and the buttons very numerous.

Twenty of the latter bore the name of New York, six carried the name of Philadelphia, ten that of Chicago, ten San Francisco, ten Seattle, ten Boston, six Denver, and so on. The name of St. Louis was printed on twenty of these buttons.

An electric wire connected each button with a magazine of powerful explosives lodged in the city whose name the button bore.

General Grant or Morgan Rockefeller or a little child could press the six buttons which connected with Denver, and wreck that city, so that one stone would not rest upon another, and so that one human being would not be left alive within its precincts.

Of this the people of Denver had no knowledge, for, until now, no necessity for a demonstration had arisen.

The consultation between the Autocrat and his military servant was not long.

"Is not this mechanism perfect!" exclaimed General Grant, as he sat down opposite his master and looked around proudly. "Consolidation, concentration! These two words express it all."

"Yes, General," began the President with a note of sadness in his voice. "This chamber is wonderful, but it is monstrous, awful and damnable, like the cavern of an Octopus. Why did the good God ever select me to be master in Hell?"

General Grant looked at the President with the faintest expression of surprise. He could scarcely believe that this was the Rockefeller whose unflinching, unyielding will had constructed and held together an economic system so great that a suggestion of its like was to be found nowhere in extant history.

"You are now in a position, Mr. President," remarked the General, "to make a very satisfactory trial of our device. You must suppress this Denver insurrection and my system is so perfect that you can wipe Denver from the face of the earth, and destroy every man, woman and child in the rebel town."

The General spoke with as much enthusiasm as his nature permitted. The prospect of trying his invention was evidently one which pleased him, and the picture of the doomed city wrecked and, its inhabitants blown to fragments, while it did not bring a smile to his grim visage, made a cold piercing light to shine out of his small gray eyes. What a difference between the face of this iron embodiment of scientific, conscienceless war and that of his heart-whole progenitor, the blood and iron hero of Appomattox!

President Rockefeller sat silent and grimly thoughtful. To look at him one would have been convinced that a great heart beat in that form where men looked only for grasping mentality.

Seeing that the President was silent, the grim General continued.

"If the Denver insurrection succeeds, even for a short time, it will inspire your people with false ideas. They may arise and destroy all your property, or at the best, instead of destroying one city, you may be compelled to destroy many. I have advised President Adams to dispatch the army to subjugate the country, but if you press those six buttons bearing the name of Denver, you may be sure Colorado and all other disaffected districts will submit."

"General," began the President, and then looking down at the floor, paused for some seconds. "General, do you think I should put upon my soul the stain of two million murders? Shall I destroy the entire population of my beautiful city of Denver?"

"That or necessity will force you to do worse," was the decisive answer.

"General!" almost shouted the President, rising suddenly and towering six feet six with his erect herculean frame. "I am but flesh and blood and not a fiend. I have a heart which beats with human sympathy. The world does not know me. It thinks me a machine and my position makes me a hermit. I am the most solitary of beings. Kings can have their courtiers, but I can have only business advisers. My servants think, but do not feel. I, who am the consolidated owner of this nation's wealth, never got more than one man's portion in my life, except of misery. The owner of this wealth is not I, but merely my name. I say my name, but it is really not my name, only the name of this vast ownership. Humanity does not know Rockefeller. They know a name,but it is the name of a business. They know a form, but not the inhabitant of that form. The tongue speaks and commands, and what it says is important. It is not I who speak, it is the business, the property. I am the most obscure and unknown thing that breathes. But look you, General, I claim the right,in the presence of such a catastrophe as your plans propose,to put property and business aside and to manifest the love I feel for mankind. You insist I must not permit that heart to influence me. I must not voice its feelings, because every word I speak is fraught with danger. No one criticises me, but no man has less freedom of action than I. I must do that which is logical or my interests suffer. Love is not extended to me. There is no love in business, and I am only what my interests make me, a Business Proposition. Sympathy is not felt for me, because power never receives sympathy, and I am power personified. General," he paused again,and then, speaking more calmly and looking at the cold immovable figure of the sphinx in military attire, said in a deep, impressive voice, "if it were possible for me to act freely; if I were my own master, then would I do as I wish, and the world would see that I am human and full of human sympathy. When I am gone they will learn all this. But while I do not say, General, that I will not destroy Denver, I do say I am in no frame of mind to do it now."

The old general was unmoved. His master's words and manner would have been highly dramatic if an appreciative soul had been present. But the regal presence, the profound emotion, the passionate words, had no significance to the soldier and mathematician who counted humanity as figures and as so many more or so many less according as the engines of war did their work.

"Then," asked the General, "what will you do? You cannot permit the people of Denver to seize your properties and become independent of your system. The example would be fatally bad and would result in the complete disintegration of your system."

"True," replied Rockefeller. "All that is true. My order against the acceptance of gold for my commodities was just and right. The people engaged in my industries are co-operating and when they part with the products of their co-operative labor for a fiction, a pretended value, a value which has no existence except in the fancies of prejudices of men, it is ruinous. I have solidified and consolidated my industries and have eliminated all wasteful features except this. I have left this until the last because it is the most difficult to handle.

"Gold hunters must enlist in my service.

"It is business.

"It is logical.

"I must suppress all sentiment.

"First, however, we must try and settle these Denver troubles without war. Let us seek through diplomacy to save them and if after one week they still persist, I will adopt your plan.

"I will then press the buttons."

So saying, the President indicated that the conference was at an end and the two left the chamber together.

CHAPTER XII.

LOWELL AT MONTRAVEN.

Montraven was the name of the Rockefeller Castle.

It was as famous almost throughout the world as the name of its great master.

Not to the White House, the palatial and beautiful successor to the Democratic miniature of royalty in old Washington, went the deputations of power as in the old days. Pilgrimages were made to Montraven instead.

It was situated on a high elevation overlooking the Mississippi in the center of the most extensive and beautiful park which landscape artist ever designed.

The building itself was constructed entirely of white Georgia marble and was the largest and most expensive private dwelling the world had ever seen.

Over a square mile of ground comprised the elevation or hill on which the edifice stood, and this was separated from the rest of the park by a retaining wall built one hundred feet above the base of the hill and all around it. Above this the structure stood nine hundred feet and seventy stories high.

For many miles this marvel of architectural skill could be seen across the plains or towering above the neighboring hills.

There were long tunnels, however, which opened through the wall around the base into the hill and which furnished spacious passages to the interior.

The doors at the entrance of each passage were guarded by unarmed sentinels who were courteous to all comers, but admitted no one except those who had passports. Even those were not permitted to enter beyond the first inside station, until their presence was announced to the office in the watch tower. If their business was such that they could be accommodated without disturbing the perfect system of the castle they were permitted to enter.

All the passages and stations were light as day at all hours, being abundantly illuminated by radium lamps.

Alden Lowell did not present himself at the outer gate of the main entrance to Montraven as became the state and condition of a Director.

He felt that it was incumbent upon him to conserve his resources which he saw dwindling day by day.

He had not lost courage, but was affected by the world's estimate of one who had no place in its established system.

He was anxious to see President Rockefeller personally.

The news of his removal from the directorship of the New England Furniture Manufacturing Company had not yet become public property in a large or record sense; but it had leaked out, and he had been cut to the quick by the heartless desertion of his former companions and friends. Many, indeed nearly all of these, completely ignored him. He presented himself in dusty apparel and on foot at Montraven.

The great Rockefeller was not usually a respecter of persons.

As a business proposition everybody was equal to everybody else before him. He regarded only the business in hand, and even the political president of the Republic would have to wait his turn unless his business was of a pressing nature. He was therefore rarely interrupted by the great, unless by special appointment, and never by common humanity, unless they believed that they had matters of large importance to be considered.

Recent events had made the President of Standard somewhat less exacting than ordinarily.

He longed for companionship.

For the first time in his life his nerves seemed affected and he felt that he would give much for the advice of a friend. Not that he would exhibit his heart to such a friend, or disclose the cause or even the fact of his perturbation; but the presence of such a friend and the disinterested counsel which he could give on matters of perhaps little moment, would lighten the burden of life. He had several times of late recalled his old friend Exmore Lowell of Boston and wondered if the son was like the father.

Alden presented his passport at the outer gate of Montraven. Like all who were similarly equipped he was freely admitted and went forward through the splendid passageway, noting with delight and interest the far-famed wonders of its architecture and structure.

Arriving at the first inner station he gave the card containing his name and a short statement that he desired to see the President in regard to a new invention which he believed would be of inestimable value to His Excellency, to a courtly and very polite attendant, and then seated himself with the large crowd of people who, while waiting, were entertained by a high class vaudeville performance.

He had perhaps waited about an hour when the same attendant who had received him, gently tapped him on the shoulder and whispered:

"President Rockefeller will see you now."

The people who had been waiting were evidently surprised that this very recent arrival would be recognized so soon.

Alden felt some trepidation as he followed the attendant to one of the many elevators which lead to the upper floors. His recent experiences and his consciousness of being out of the System diminished that assurance which had formerly distinguished him without giving offense.

It was several minutes before they arrived at the President's ante-room. Here he waited for some minutes longer when he was ushered into the inner office of the economic king.

Mr. Rockefeller rose to welcome the young man.

Alden was almost embarassed with astonishment at what he saw.

As the President took his hand he towered above his caller fully six inches and appeared the very personification of power. Alden, himself, was six feet tall and athletic, and he was hardly prepared to face a giant such as this Economic King now proved to be.

The extreme plainness of the Master's personal surroundings also surprised him. There was not the slighestt sign of ornamentation of any kind in this business sanctum of the world's autocratic bookkeeper, except that the walls were a perfect picture gallery from which peered the strong faces of those who had contributed largely to the creation of the Rockefeller system. The portrait of John D. Rockefeller and his descendants in the direct line, J. Pierpont Morgan and his descendants, of James J. Hill, E. H. Harriman, Andrew Carnegie, Weyerhauser and others who were illustrious accountants and system builders in their day and generation, looked sternly down upon the stranger.

"Son of my old friend, welcome, welcome!" exclaimed Rockefeller grasping the hand of Alden. "Be seated," he continued, resuming his own seat.

From the running fire of questions with which the President plied him, Alden concluded that he was unaware of his deposition.

It was some minutes before Alden was able to suggest his own matter. At last he said:

"Mr. President, I am not here merely as the son of my father, but I feel deeply grateful to you for your kindly consideration of his memory. I am here to call your attention to an invention in which he was deeply interested during his life, and which I have the honor to have perfected."

The President looked at him wearily but with an evident wish to humor him.

"I know," said he, "that Exmore was interested in something visionary. No doubt you are prepared to exhibit your machine. I am glad that you have furnished me this explanation of your refusal to resist your exclusion from the Furniture Directorate. I will afford you ample opportunity to set your machine up and will ask you to allow me to witness its operation at the earliest opportunity. It must be quite a machine to induce you to make so great a sacrifice as to vacate the Directorate of one of my best companies."

Alden started perceptibly when the President showed that he was informed as to his record. He also felt impressed that his father's devoted friend was determined not to believe in his culpability as judged by the Rockefeller standard. He was about to explain further, for he felt that he could not afford to appear in a false light even at the risk of another rebuff.

"But,"—he began.

"You shall make no explanations," declared the President decisively. "You will perhaps recognize my right to command. It is my will that you be prepared to exhibit your machine as speedily as may be. When can you be ready?"

"Tomorrow afternoon, Your Excellency."

"Good! Let it be at three o'clock then."

So saying he summoned an attendant and gave directions that every attention be shown Alden as an honored guest and that whatever orders Alden should give be obeyed.

Having withdrawn from the Executive Presence Alden and his attendant proceeded to select a room suitable for his purpose, and that having been found in one of the subterrnaean chambers, he gave orders to have his machine and chemicals brought over from the station and made all arrangements to be prepared for the exhibition at the time designated.

CHAPTER XIII.

HELEN CHANNING AT HOME.

Helen Channing lived in the Watertown Standard, a small hotel in one of Boston's suburbs. The people of the locality knew very little about her, except that she was regarded as highly aristocratic and exclusive, and that she seemed to be possessed of ample means to live well in her retired position. She was not known to be in the Rockefeller service, but rumor had it that she was an annuitant of the Great Master himself, as the New Englanders called the President of Standard.

New England people were ever of an inquiring turn of mind. Curiosity was and has ever been one of their prominent traits of character and they have always claimed a democratic right to know all about their neighbors. Although the ancient Puritan has practically disappeared from the soil and his descendants have been washed away by the tidal wave of population which, early in this century and late in the last, set in from Italy, Greece, Ireland and France, yet he seems, in departing, to have thrown his character and traits right into the teeth of the races he left behind. An Irish, French, Italian and Greek mortal born in Yankee Land, is covered all over with the Puritanic and Yankee birth marks of the old school.

So the people around the Watertown Standard were anxious to learn all about Miss Helen Channing. They were baffled it is true, but so beautiful was her face, her form and manner, and so proudly and yet so benignantly did she carry herself, that she was absolutely above suspicion and was beloved by all. There were those things the people noticed, however, which puzzled them. She went to New York every quarter with a middle aged lady whom she called "Auntie," and with whom she apparently lived. She went to Boston once a week in the evening, being escorted thither by Mr. Lowell, a handsome young man who came out from the city. She was a constant attendant at the Baptist church.

It should be known also that Helen spent much time in writing. She was a deep student of literature, history and politics, and had written some poetry which had made her pen name "Lustra" a household word in Boston. Few people knew, however, who "Lustra" was. She was undoubtedly gifted as a platform speaker and on those occasions when she had occupied the lecture platform, her low, sweet voice, so fascinating and persuasive in woman, held her audience spell-bound and her sublime ideals to which her life seemed devoted, left their impression on her audience and lifted up their spirits long after the meeting was closed.

She was a born organizer, too, but the populace never knew this. Her work was done in secret; and, as she confidently believed, in violation of Morgan Rockefeller's business rules. Personally she did not fear being discharged from Standard's employ, for she was, as the people suspected, an annuitant.

Lowell had known her for something over a year at the time of the meeting which has been described. They were both members of the same church, and Lowell had not proven immune to the fascination of this beautiful, gifted and remarkable young woman. She had so far influenced him, indeed, that without ever suspecting her own personal power over him, she had induced him to become a member of the fraternal order which she had organized, and to sacrifice everything, as she believed, for her. When at last it became evident to her how large that sacrifice was, she was deeply solicitous for his welfare, and yet, woman-like, and fanatical as she was, never felt in the slightest degree to blame or in the least remorseful. When she learned a few days after his departure for St. Louis that he had met with a cordial reception from the President of Standard she was greatly relieved.

It was Helen's custom to take long walks in the country, where she delighted in the study of nature. Mrs. Locksley, "Auntie", would frequently accompany her on these "tramps", as she called them, but sometimes she went alone. She always strove to return before sundown, so that Mrs. Locksley, who had a motherly interest in her and who idolized her, would have no occasion for worry.

On the very next evening, however, after Alden Lowell arrived at Montraven she did not return. In vain Mrs. Locksley waited and long into the night she kept her vigil. Not being able to bear the suspense any longer, she reported to the police that her ward had gone out that afternoon and had not returned. But, while this drove Mrs. Locksley almost frantic, knowing Helen as she did, she was not able to give the police any facts which could arouse their interset more than to say that it was very unusual.

"How old is Miss Channing?" they asked.

"Twenty-four," she answered.

"Do you suspect anything is wrong? Has she any enemies?"

"I don't know what is wrong. I never thought she had enemies."

"Oh, well, it is one o'clock. Probably she is with friends. No doubt she will come home in the morning."

"But she never did that before."

"Maybe this is an exception. Always has to be a first time."

In the morning a detective came to the hotel and asked for Mrs. Locksley.

When the lady appeared he requested her to explain the circumstances of Miss Channing's disappearance.

Now, Mrs. Locksley was not given to answering questions about Helen, especially if they were asked by strangers.

"You will have to tell me who you are before I answer you," she said brusquely.

The stranger handed her a card on which was printed "Moreland Hughes, Captain of Standard Detective Force."

"Who sent you?" persisted Mrs. Locksley.

"Mrs. Locksley," said Hughes in a high falsetto voice, "I have information which leads me to believe that Miss Channing is far away from here. I must ask you questions if I am to be of any service to her. I am especially anxious to help her as I have orders from very high authority to aid and protect her in every possible way."

Hughes spoke so positively that Mrs. Locksley sat down, and, asking him to be seated, promised to answer any questions she could.

"I know who Miss Channing is," he began, "and I think you must be fully aware of her high connection. The municipal and political police know nothing about her and it is not necessary that they should. When you have answered my questions, I will tell you my suspicions. Is Miss Channing your ward?"

"She was before she came of age."

"Have you seen any strange persons around here lately?"

"I never noticed. Helen was always good to everybody. I don't think she has any enemies."

"Did anybody ever make an attempt to abduct her, to your knowledge?"

Such a thought had never occurred to her. Why should they? Mrs. Locksley had known Helen from birth; had held her in her arms; had known her wonderful father and mother; had known, too, that these had powerful relations, but understood that they were ignored by those relatives. When the father and mother had died, Mrs. Locksley had been made her guardian and supplied with ample funds to properly maintain and educate her ward; but she did not know who was responsible for this attention. It had never occurred to her that her Helen was a person of such importance that anybody would care to steal her.

"No, indeed!" she said.

"Do you know who she is?"

"I guess I do. I knew her father and mother, and was with them when Helen was born."

But there had always been a mystery about Helen's parents and their influence in Mrs.Locksley's mind.

"There were many things which I never did understand," she added.

"I do not want to frighten you, Mrs. Locksley," said Hughes, "but I have reason to believe that Miss Channing has been seized by a band of outlaws who are holding her for a ransom."

If Mrs. Locksley was noted for anything, it was her resolution and courage. Nobody could ever say that she was personally afraid of anything, and she was ready to face any odds where her ward or her principles were at stake. There was something so mysterious, so unexpected, so indefinite and yet so probable about what had now been suggested that she was completely upset.

"Oh!" she exclaimed. "It may be true. They will kill my darling! What can I do?"

"You can do nothing," replied Hughes coolly and almost nonchalantly. "If Miss Channing is in the power of the outlaws, as I suspect, she is perfectly safe from any physical harm. They will not abuse her, and will make her life comfortable, if she is not frightened to death. Their interest lies in caring for her, for to destroy her would be to lose the reward they demand."

This was no consolation to Mrs. Locksley. She was nearly frantic. When the detective left her, however, she was calmer, but if she could have had the slightest intimation of the direction taken by the supposed outlaws, she would have hurried, without hesitation, to the rescue of her darling.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CONFERENCE.

President Josiah Quincy Adams, Chief Magistrate of the United States of North America, was a man of great and varied learning. Descended from the early Presidents of that name, he inherited their independent spirit and eminent talents. Self-reliance was the keystone of his character as it was of his forebears; but self-reliant and independent as he was he could not escape the inevitable, and wasted no time in such vain effort. He was proficient in every phase of statecraft. His memory was a vast storehouse of historical knowledge which his logical and finely traine dmind arranged and employed with telling effect. In his department he was easily the foremost man in the nation, but somehow, in the estimation of all but foreign governments, his government had become very much like a gilded throne of ancient days in modern Europe, purely ornamental.

The difficulties in Denver were well known to President Adams. But they were not political difficulties. They were, however, serious enough to warrant the convocation of congress in extraordinary session, and it was decided that such session should be called if the difficulties were not settled. President Adams made haste to offer President Rockefeller the services of the army if they should be needed to restore law and order, and preparations for the transportation of immense bodies of troops were begun. The propriety of this action was not questioned except in the disaffected districts.

Shortly after his conversation with General Grant in the military chamber, President Rockefeller invited President Adams to call at Montraven Castle. Such an invitation would not have been considered, coming from another source, but coming from President Rockefeller it had all the impressiveness of a command. Mr. Adams no more thought of disobeying than his ancient ancestors, John and John Quincy, would have ignored a unanimous demand of the business interests. He accepted the invitation without delay and proceeded at once to the castle.

The procession of His Excellency, the President of the United States of North America, presented an imposing spectacle with its vanguard of cavalry and its gilded autos as it proceeded through the principal streets of the capital city.

Heralds preceding notified the people who crowded the streets of the city of the approach of the greatest American representative of political power.

In 1900 such a procession would have been viewed with contempt.

The political presidency represented real power in those days because the citizens of the Republic had then a belief in its reality.

In 1990, political power meant little or nothing.

As it had become scarcely more than ornamental and as the real power belonged to the economic government, men felt that the former should be possessed of something like imposing pomp.

It had become, therefore, a passing show.

When President Adams and his party arrived at Montraven, the procession passed up the grand passage to the first inner station. In anticipation of the visit, this station was decorated with patriotic emblems, and the company awaiting His Excellency consisted of attaches of the Castle. Here the distinguished arrivals were conducted from their autos to the elevators and taken to the splendid reception hall above where President Rockefeller, without display, but with the politeness and consideration of a finished gentleman and a simple democrat, met them and extended a cordial and heartfelt welcome.

The formalities being soon concluded, the President of Standard led the President of the Republic into his private sanctum, the same as that into which Lowell had been ushered, and took up several matters which were supposed to be of mutual importance to the state and the Merger. In the course of the conversation, President Rockefeller mentioned the name of Exmore Lowell as a fellow-townsman of President Adams.

"Exmore's son, Alden, was appointed a director in the New England Furniture Manufacturing Company, but it was learned that he had been influenced by those fanatics, the Fraternalists, and the company deposed him. The company can not and should not reinstate him, but there are strong reasons why I do not wish him to suffer. He is here in the castle now, and will, at three o'clock, give an exhibition of his mirage reflector. As Exmore was a particular friend of yours also, and as I rather think this invention may prove of great scientific interest, I shall take the liberty to ask you, with some members of your cabinet, to be present."

President Adams was pleased.

"I am glad," he said, "that you find it possible to take care of Alden's future. I understood that he had been deposed and felt sorry. Indeed, it was my purpose today to ask if you had any objection to his being appointed to some suitable office. Your business rules very properly exclude Fraternalists from your employment, but politically we do not in theory object to them. Of course, Your Excellency will not expect us to appoint a Fraternalist to office against your objections."

"As to the appointment, I will be glad to consider that at another time, Mr. President," rejoined President Rockefeller. "We may both find a satisfactory solution of our little problem when we see what he has. These inventions I usually refer to a committee or to the corporations whose mechanism they improve. But Exmore's son is entitled to some consideration from his father's friend."

"I shall be deeply interested," remarked Mr. Adams. "I was Mr. Exmore Lowell's confidential adviser for some time in my younger days."

Mr. Adams was apparently about forty-five years of age.

The two great men returned to the reception hall and later to the buffet, where they lunched together. The occasion was one of festivity, and nearly every conceivable diversion was provided for the visitors and habitues of this vast castle wherein resided, together with the President and his immediate suite, over twenty thousand persons.

CHAPTER XV.

THE MIRAGE REFLECTOR.

The reflector was installed in one of the subterranean chambers of the castle which Lowell selected because he found it to have suitable atmospheric conditions. At the proper time the two executives and several of their most distinguished advisors, including the Secretary of Applied Sciences and the President of the Standard National Laboratory, accompanied by a guide, proceeded in corridor cars and down elevators, to what thenceforth was known as the Mirage Chamber. This was semicircular in form and scarcely more than twenty by forty feet in size.

After the distinguished company were seated, President Rockefeller graciously introduced Alden and President Adams took particular pains to step forward and whisper words of encouragement to his fellow townsman.

"Alden," said he, "Boston will be honored in your success. I saw several of your father's experiments in this line and I believe you will win out some day. Even if you fail now, believe me, I will give you every opportunity in my power to succeed hereafter."

"Your words are doubly appreciated by me, Your Excellency," returned Alden, his eyes filling with tears of gratification. "I thank God that I am able to assure you that my reflector is a success."

A few preliminaries having been attended to, Alden stated to the assembled party that his exhibition must of necessity seem mysterious and would partake of the supernatural in appearance. He desired it understood that he had no claims on the supernatural, but that the effects they were about to witness were accomplished purely by the application of a natural law.

"Now," said he, "in concluding, let me request Your Excellencies, President Rockefeller and President Adams to state what scene or part of the world you desire to view. In producing such scene I shall make use of the mirage principle, with which you are more or less familiar. I should also say to you that this room is peculiarly adapted, though small, to reproduce any scene which is being enacted in any part of the world. I shall be glad if Your Excellencies will express your wishes."

"I shall place that burden on President Adams," exclaimed Mr. Rockefeller. "What scene will you have my friend produce, Mr. President?"

President Adams was not quite prepared to make a selection, but in an off-hand manner suggested mid-ocean.

Suddenly, as if by magic, a vapor began to arise in front of the east wall of the room. This quickly became light and in the mist, the blue and troubled waters of the unstable sea appeared. The billows seemed to be rolling toward the audience and grew so plain, in a few minutes, that the room itself seemed to rise and fall with the swelling sea. Nothing could be more desolate than this restless waste where was no sign of life and where was no silent shore to limit its will.

As they watched it, awestruck by the perfection of the representation and impressed by the marvel and mystery of the ocean and all the wonderful shades of color which the reflector preserved, suddenly there came into the scene another object. With a rapidity of flight equal to that of a bird, which it somewhat resembled, it skimmed along the surface of the sea with wings drooping and spreading alternately, as it came on. From a tiny speck against the horizon where the water and sky met, it grew into a great ship which seemed to leap from wave to wave, sometimes with its keel in the sea, sometimes above it.

"Is not this wonderful?" cried President Adams. "That is certainly our good ship Mayflower. If, indeed she is now in mid-ocean, as our friend, the Professor tells us, then she will reach New York tonight and will be here tomorrow morning."

On it came until its great front filled the scene with so realistic an effect that the company arose and turned as if to fly before a terrible and destructive projectile. Like a ghost it floated straight on through the little room, an impalpable mist. The winged ship, the glory of the latter part of the twentieth century, had passed the tract of mid ocean embraced in the mirage and the reflection was gone.

The two presidents and their guests and counselors, men of great experience, men who had seen nearly everything of note, men with critical minds which had long ceased to be deceived or impressed, watched the scene like innocent children. Before them still palpitated the ocean, substantial in the distance, flowing ever towards them, becoming a mist, not to the sense of touch, but to the sense of sight, as it surged around them and flowing on to become again substantial on the western wall of their room.

"Verily," said President Adams, "we dwell in the midst of the ocean."

"The half was surely not told to us," declared President Rockefeller. "Your exhibition is remarkable, Professor." Then addressing the assembled company, he said, "Gentlemen, we have beheld three marvels of this age. The sea, the material manifestation of God's greatest power. The mirage reflector perfected by my great friend, Alden Lowell, and the modern ship, half swallow and half waterfowl, a compromise between the sea and the air and capable of sweeping across the land on wheels and wings."

"I think," interposed Secretary Agassiz, "that the ship is the glory of the age, although this new invention may have uses which I have not yet anticipated. The old scheme of aerial navigation was visionary. But when Maldrum conceived the idea of the winged ship which could rise into the air or settle into the water as its safety required, the problem was solved. That the same ship could fly above the earth's surface where obstacles impeded its progress on that surface or, balancing itself with its wings, roll swiftly on its bicycle wheels to its destination, revolutionized the methods and system of transportation."

"Excuse me, gentlemen," interrupted Alden, "but

I must enter a claim now for my mirage reflector. I am convinced that its utility is far greater than you have considered. With this instrument I can search the earth and can, at a moment's notice, give you accurate information of what is taking place. Shall I show you what is at this moment occuring in the rebellious state of Colorado?"

The company looked incredulous. Then the new thought seemed to strike each one with astounding force. They had not considered the subject at all and merely viewed it as a novelty.

What, indeed, if it should be true that he, the the Master of All Wealth, the Master of All Men, the Master of All the Forces of Creation and Destruction of which men had knowledge, was now to become well nigh omniscient through this new instrument!

Even the great Rockefeller was staggered by the thought.

He knew better than they how complete would be the concentration of his power with this new invention, in connection with the military chamber and the elimination of the one safety valve of individualism, namely, gold as a money metal.

Almost fearfully these stalwart men, the nation's brainiest and best, seated themselves again and with serious faces quietly consented to continue the exhibition.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE REVOLUTION IN THE REFLECTOR

The scene which Alden introduced to the now serious attention of the statesmen and savants who comprised his audience, was not precisely what they expected.

Instead of representing Denver, the reflector showed a mountain road and wild surroundings.

An old man wearily and slowly descended the mountain with a long staff in one hand and a bundle in the other.

A company of horsemen was making its way down the same road, each rider having the appearance of preparation for military duty.

Behind these, carriages came containing important looking persons, men and women.

Then the scene was again shifted to another locality where men arrayed like soldiers, but displaying little of the training of soldiers, were marching along the highway. Alden exhibited in quick succession many such scenes, all calculated to show warlike movements at the seat of war.

Finally he showed a great public square in the City of Denver and a vast multitude listening to an orator who was dressed in military attire.

President Rockefeller recognized the orator as Masterson.

It was an active but silent scene which the reflector produced.

Silent, because there was no way to present both sound and action.

Active, because it was plain that some great movement was in progress which was intensely interesting to the people there gathered.

In a few minutes the orator ceased to speak and the crowd made manifestations of frantic enthusiasm.

Hands and handkerchiefs were waved and hats were thrown in the air.

Shortly after, the men began to fall into line with military regularity.

It was noticeable that they were formed into companies and officered.

Masterson left his place on the platform and mounted a horse. Then all moved forward as if a command had been given.

The men who were watching them knew that they were witnessing the unopposed development of a revolution.

With his reflector Alden followed the procession of armed citizens down the wide and stately streets of the beautiful city of the plains.

The scene was very strange as presented, for magnificently uniformed bands leading some division or regiment would seem to be marching straight into the little hall playing on instruments from which no sound proceeded. On they marched, and ghost-like, their misty forms moved through the room, paying no heed to material objects, and in the mirage thus conjured up by the seeming magic of the youth, there were no walls except the apparitions of buildings in the distant metropolis.

Yet the audience knew it was a real scene which was being enacted.

Soon the marching hosts halted.

Alden once more sought the head of the procession. There Masterson sat on his horse, evidently giving orders to his men.

The procession had stopped before a tall imposing office building.

President Rockefeller knew it was the headquarters of the Standard Oil Company for Colorado.

The men to whom the leader had given orders entered the building and presently returned, escorting certain other men whom they conducted to Masterson.

Evidently some conversation was had which did not satisfy Masterson, for his men compelled the others to submit to be handcuffed.

President Rockefeller started perceptibly and frowned.

He knew that his managing officers, among the rest, Standard Director Bell, one of his strongest and most trusty lieutenants, had been taken captive by the lawless rebels.

He knew that the movement of the many to take control of his property had begun.

The scene was intensely dramatic. Every man in the audience had risen to his feet.

The form of the giant President of Standard towered high above all the rest and his lion face, strikingly similar to the features of his mother's great ancestor, J. Pierpont Morgan, resembled a thunder cloud.

While the intangible reflections flitted around him and with indescribable weirdness occupied the same place as that occupied by some of the audience, producing an effect like a light thin veil thrown over them, he raised his hand as if speaking to the men in the mirage, and shouted.

"You rob my companies! You take possession of my property! Wretched people! Do you not know that I have designed everything for the best? I proposed to give you a thousand benefits. Your inexcusable action puts it beyond my power to help you. Oh, that Grant were here to witness this outrage!"

The President of Standard indicated he had seen enough of Alden's invention for that day and extended his congratulations on having achieved the most important success of years. President Adams was even more expressive than his superior and the other members of the assemblage overwhelmed the young inventor, now recognized by them all as one of the most distinguished men of the nation.

Only about an hour and a half had been spent in watching the scenes reflected by Alden's machine. The information obtained from it was sufficient to apprise them that the Colorado and Denver revolution had progressed so far that it could not be ignored.

The only question was how far the Federal Government could be concerned.

It was not a secession movement.

It did not violate any rights which the Federal constitution guaranteed. There was no interference with the mails.

So far it did not appear that any overt act had been committed against even the state officers.

But so large and so consequential was the movement that President Adams was inclined to consider it the proper occasion to establish a needful precedent so that henceforth no doubt could exist in similar predicaments what course to adopt.

He therefore, without hesitation, announced his purpose to send the army into Colorado and restore law and its observance.

The day was, for all but the Master, a gala day at Montraven. Rockefeller was a magnificent host. But there were no excesses indulged in that city within Montraven Castle. The President of Standard was not only the soul of business honor, but he expected and exacted no less of all who were in his employment. He was temperate, moral, prudent and considerate in all things. No better example of a master of the commercial sphere, and no better pattern for the servant ever lived. As a citizen, a master and a gentleman, this wealthiest and most powerful of all mankind was above reproach.

CHAPTER XVII

THE DEATH OF MORGAN ROCKEFELLER.

The next day, when the presidential party was gone, President Rockefeller hastily summoned the commanding general of the army, General Grant, to Montraven.

The General was at this time busy making preparations for his expected campaign.

Yet he left all and obeyed the summons of the economic master.

When he arrived at the castle he was ushered into the military chamber where he found the President of Standard awaiting his advent.

But when he looked into the great man's face, the cold eye of the General at once detected something unusual.

The President's complexion was naturally florid. Although sixty, his cheeks were adorned with a color which ordinary persons, at first glance, regarded as the flush of health. But some knowing ones whispered that the great man would some time suddenly develop an organic weakness.

When General Grant found him in the military room, the President received his guest, sitting in a reclining chair with his hand pressed in the region of his heart, and his countenance contracted with pain.

"What's the matter, Mr. President?" asked General Grant in his usual brusque tone.

"Oh! nothing," answered the President, changing his attitude and speaking with difficulty. "A little heart trouble. But I am better now," he continued, after a short pause.

"I hope Your Excellency is in no danger," remarked the General.

The President had now resumed his upright normal attitude, and his pain seemed to have disappeared.

"I have decided that you are right in regard to the Denver trouble, General," he said.

The General sat silent and grim and made no answer.

"Your plan of exemplary punishment must be applied," continued Mr. Rockefeller, his own face assuming the cold, sphinx-like, expressionless look which characterized that of the old general. "We must destroy that rebellious city."

"When?" asked the general shortly.

"Tonight. At midnight."

"Your Excellency might better do it now. If Your Excellency will but say the word I will press those buttons. Why wait?" urged the man of arms and war.

"It is an execution, General, and midnight is a better hour for that. Denver has been tried by me and found guilty."

Then he related to the General the scenes presented by the mirage reflector and the manner in which that marvelous invention had come into his control. Even Grant was astonished and showed it.

"That and the military chamber are the extinguishers of war," exclaimed he.

"I feel," resumed the President, ignoring the General's remark, "that this is the greatest trial and the most unhappy event of my life. The wars which have thus far disturbed me have been solely political, and I was glad to beat my enemies in fair battle. But this nearly unmans me. We seem to steal on the people unawares and destroy them when they least expect it."

"But your power, like your property, is concentrated," argued the General. "If you admit that your right to your property is not absolute, you make a concession which will lose it all. If you should apprise Denver people of your purpose to ignite the magazines stored within their city limits, they would find means to thwart your plans. If Denver escapes punishment your interests are doomed. If other cities find that it is easy to appropriate all the property in their limits, they will need only slight provocation to do it. If you do not strike soon you will lose all."

"General, you have no idea how deeply I have felt the misery which I seem foredoomed to precipitate. Never have I been unsympathetic. In fact, my life which has seemed so selfish, has been a sacrifice for the good of mankind. I am as complete a martyr to the great cause of human progress as any of the saints. I have denied myself all pleasures; have never married, although I yearned for home and children; have been concerned altogether with the concentration of business for a single purpose. It was my wish to compel the gold miners of the Southwest to come into my system. Gold has no value to me except in the arts. I would rather put a value on an hour's work and fix that value permanently. Then I could give a man who worked for me an hour, a check to show that I had the value of an hour's work which he had performed and that such value was added to my accumulated wealth. If he wants anything in the world, I have all the facilities to get it for him—land, sea, forests, mines, tools, ships, theatres, hotels, parks. If he will return his check, I will give the value of the hour's labor it reppresents. It was 'business' that I should adopt the new plan. It was best for me and for my people. Yet I am now involved in war by the men who are wedded to old customs and influenced by old prejudices."

The discussion continued for some time during which President Rockefeller seemed to age visibly with each passing minute. No other subject seemed to interest him and he was loathe to leave the place. It was late in the afternoon when the General returned to his headquarters, leaving the President in the Military Chamber. It was agreed that he should report at midnight and that the magazines of Denver, of whose existence Denver people knew nothing, should be touched off by the hand of the General as a military necessity.

President Rockefeller remained alone in the chamber. In the bright light, the light of an overhead radium lamp, he sat in the chair in which the General found him. Except the General, whose supervision of the construction of this chamber made him familiar with that part of the castle, no person knew where the President was, because this military chamber was jealously guarded. Only the operator of the elevator in the remote part of the castle saw him as he entered the corridor which led thither, but even he knew not where the Master had gone.

In his reclining chair the great man sat gazing at the wall and straight at the ivory buttons on which were printed the word "Denver". The gaze became a fixed stare. Poor Rockefeller!

The minutes flew and grew into hours and still he sat in the same position, staring neither to the right nor the left, but fixedly at the same printed name, and when at midnight, two men opened the door of that chamber, they found him motionless, silent, and cold.

The hour had struck.

The day of power and destiny was done.

The great man, the most potent of any age and clime in this old world of sin and death, had died of a broken heart.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHO SHALL BE KING?

Independence day, July 4th, 1990, the world was shocked at the news that Morgan Rockefeller was dead. So momentous was the event regarded that government, society, business and all forms of human activity were deeply affected as if some awful cataclysm were impending.

It meant that all of North America and large interests abroad and millions of human beings who were attached to the Rockefeller estate, as serfs in ancient Russia were attached to the soil, were to be transferred to a new master.

None could foresee what would come next.

Even in Denver, rebellion failed to take on the finish of a revolution.

Nor will anybody ever know whether General Grant forgot to press the buttons which would destroy Denver, or they failed, for some reason, to respond to his touch.

Howsoever that may be, Denver still reared her stately form to catch the sunshine glow upon the eternal plains.

President Adams, the trusted friend of Rockefeller, was also the custodian of the last will and testament of the deceased.

It was sealed in an envelope and deposited in the President's vault in the executive mansion.

It was to be removed from the envelope, opened and read in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives in joint session.

As it disposed, by its terms, of all wealth of a continent, those august bodies did not disdain the honor thus conferred.

But "Congress" in 1990, as in 1890 and 1790, was composed of creatures of the business interests.

In 1990 the expression could be simplified by saying that they were the creatures of Rockefeller.

Therefore Congress accepted the duty assigned with a full consciousness of its great importance.

Before the contents of the will were known to any person, other than the scrivener who wrote it, it was the subject of universal discussion.

The daily prints were all and everywhere in America the property of the Rockefeller estate.

Those in Denver, however, were in the hands of the Revolutionists. Masterson's friends dictated their policy.

The Denver Herald did not exult over the death of Rockefeller. With becoming dignity it "bowed before the will of Almighty God and recognized that in removing Morgan Rockefeller by death He had intervened to prevent the complete demonetization of gold and the continuation of that monopolistic form of Socialism which Rockefeller represented."

But even the newspapers of the gold states counseled moderation in the conduct of the revolution.

It was evident that death was producing a reaction in economic thought and the people were quite ready to return to the great consolidation, if some concession were made by the new heirs.

President Adams had been deeply impressed by Alden Lowell's mirage reflector. Believing that all men were interested in the will of Morgan Rockefeller, he called that young gentleman into consultation and, although Alden was almost prostrated at the news he heard from Boston, and the inability of his friends to give him any clue as to the whereabouts of Miss Helen Channing, yet he was able to make provision, that on the day when the will should be read before the chosen witnesses, the Senate and House of Representatives, mirage reflections should be given of the scene in every metropolitan city of the land.

So complete was the Rockefeller system of manufacture and distribution and so simple the principle of the mirage when it was explained, that in thirty days after the death of the President of Standard, arrangements were completed and the vast cities of New York, Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, Minneapolis, Mobile, Galveston, San Francisco, Portland and Seattle, and a hundred others of equal importance were supplied with the reflectors and wireless telephones.

Thus the witnesses of the reading were to be multitudinous, so that no room might exist for doubting the genuineness of the document.

On the eventful day the nation's great men assembled at the nation's capital.

Friends of the deceased were they all.

They had enjoyed his bounty and had been useful to him beyond the ordinary and had been rewarded by annuities.

Outside of this and their official salaries, if they held public office, they had no income.

But they constituted a glorious and distinguished company.

Learning was there in the persons of the most eminent savants of any age or country.

Genius was there in forms of actual inventors and famous authors who had been recognized by the industrial head.

Industry was there invested with the greatness of achievement and the consciousness of power.

But except in the spheres of sentiment all were equal or nearly so.

In the great hall of the representatives the legislators had gathered. The President himself was to be present, and the will was to be read by no less a personage.

The Speaker of the House of Representatives was to preside.

It was probably the first time in the history of the nation that a President had appeared for any purpose in the legislative branch except to take the oath of office.

During the thirty days which had elapsed since the great man died, President Adams had fruitlessly searched for the missing heir, daughter of a sister of the deceased, who was believed to be in the city of Boston.

She was, without dispute, the only heir of the House of Rockefeller, and few doubted that the great bulk of the estate would be given her. She was sought for as diligently as if she were the heir to a throne, and the mystery surrounding her disappearance grieved and perplexed His Excellency and the people. As for Alden, he had learned from the President himself that the heir they sought was none other than the beautiful girl, whose influence had been both his undoing and his good fortune, and whose loss had now nearly prostrated him.

Thus the distressing situation caused by the death of the Master, and the disappearance of his sole heir, increased the uncertainty of the nation, and when the Chief Magistrate and Cabinet officers entered the great hall, beyond the noise of many persons rising to quietly greet the nation's political head, no sound was heard. The scene was solemn and impressive and when the chaplain led in prayer, the reverence shown and undoubtedly felt by the multitude of spectators, not only in the capital, but in the myriad cities all over the land, betokened the sincere regard in which religion was held.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE WILL

President Adams preceded the ceremony of breaking the seal which enveloped the will by a brief address.

"Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives and Fellow Citizens: We are met to witness the transfer of interests so vast that it is almost impossible for the mind to comprehend the importance of this event. Our great and noble friend, the strong and upright master, the learned and capable director, the providential trustee of unlimited wealth, is dead; and, although we deeply mourn his death, yet we are compelled to turn from our sorrow and concern ourselves with the affairs of life.

"We realize that the stability of human society depends upon the recognition of the right of each person to acquire and own property, and the remarkable family from which the deceased is descended has displayed abilities in that respect unparalleled in the history of man. It is safe to say that all things having any value are, under the forms of law, the property of the Rockefeller estate. We are about to learn from the last testament of this great man how he wishes his estate to be distributed, and I am happy in the belief that religion and education have fitted the one hundred and eighty million people of the republic to approve any disposition he may have made of it. I will now break the seal."

Holding the envelope containing the will before him, the President slowly and with impressive dignity removed the cover, and ostentatiously exhibited the document.

Probably all present rather expected that an instrument which transferred possession of so vast an estate, estimated at over three hundred billion dollars, would be bulky and voluminous, but were surprised to observe that it was, in truth, extremely short.

Even President Adams looked surprised, but said nothing and read as follows:

"Last Will and Testament of Morgan Rockefeller:

"I, Morgan Rockefeller, of Montraven, Missouri, being of sound and disposing mind and memory and in good health do make and declare this instrument to be my last will and testament;

"Item: I hereby revoke all former wills heretofore made by me.

"Item: I give, devise and bequeath all my property of whatsoever name and nature, both real and personal, to the United States Government, as it now is or hereafter may be constituted, in trust for the people of the United States, and authorize said trustee to operate the industries or to sell and dispose of the said property, or any part thereof, and use the proceeds for the public good or distribute the same equally among the beneficiaries, as it may be deemed proper.

"Item: Said bequest is so made subject to the annuities heretofore by me granted, and said annuities shall be continued in force during the natural life of each annuitant.

"Item: Said bequest is further subject to an annuity of one million dollars which I hereby direct shall be paid to my niece, only daughter of my deceased sister Helen, each year during her natural life.

"Item: I hereby constitute and appoint Hon. Josiah Quincy Adams, of Boston, Massachusetts, to be the sole executor of this will."

The will was executed as provided by the laws of the State of Missouri.

To say that the people all over the nation, everywhere, were astonished, does hardly more than suggest the condition of mind in which this inexplicable conduct of a proprietor and this remarkable will of a grasping monopolist, left the people.

They were for a moment dazed.

President Adams could not believe his eyes, his ears or his own voice.

In evident confusion he referred back to the item involving the bequest to the government, cleared his throat again and again, turned pale, and looked up blankly at the audience, as if he had made some palpable blunder and could find no way to correct it.

Finally he recovered his composure.

"The will of God be done!" he exclaimed devoutly. "This extraordinary generosity on the part of Mr. Morgan Rockefeller is made apparent to all the nation in an instant. What can or shall be done with it remains to be seen. But," continued he, "I hold in my hand another writing which is taken from the same cover with the testament and, as requested by Mr. Rockefeller, in his life time, I will read it as a companion piece to his will." He then read with an unsteady voice, as follows:

"TO THE PEOPLE OF THIS AND ALL COMING AGES:

"You have heard the will of him who during his life was denounced openly and secretly as an autocrat, a monopolist, a dictator and a tyrant.

"You are surprised at its contents, for you supposed his efforts at consolidation and concentration were the outcome of a selfish desire for power.

"You gave him no credit as a lover of the human race.

"You saw him intent on completely eliminating all competition and creating an economic system which he and his successors should control perpetually.

"That this has been accomplished is beyond dispute.

"The development of system among men is all that makes history interesting.

"The three evolutionary stages which are now apparent are the tribal or semi-barbarous, the military or feudal and the commercial.

"The splendid cooperation, discipline and uniformity of the military system was made possible by educating large bodies of men and women to act, move and think together. It was the development of the principle of concentration and consolidation which united many small, nomadic tribes, and made a great nation.

"The Military system stole into the world and took possession of it when the tribal system was asleep.

"The commercial system stole in and took advantage of the weakness of the Military system. It was not placed on its foundation by the Military system, but in spite of it.

"The president of the Standard Oil Company has taken advantage of the weakness of the commercial system, and has made the great Merger a fact.

"The world has been mistaken about the power of government.

"It has no power which it did not borrow from the economic system just as the moon is supposed to borrow its light from the sun.

"Government, in view of the perfection of the economic system, is a dead planet and has no light or power of its own.

"In the time of John D. Rockefeller men thought government was the sum of all earthly power.

"Because they held to that error the Rockefeller and Morgan families were able to dominate the people and own all property and the national and state governments.

"No government ever created an economic system.

"Every economic or business system creates its own government and makes it what it will.

"The Feudal government made an absolute monarchy, but that was needed by the landed aristocracy, whose sole business was landlordism.

"The Military system, which included the Feudal, required a dictator.

"The Commercial system developed slowly and finally compelled the military king and dictator to be governed by, and take orders from, a parliament whose members were elected by the commercial interests.

"The consolidated merger or autocratic system of the Rockefellers does not concern itself much with any other government than its own, and tolerates the political system as an empty compliment to a vain but submissive people.

"LISTEN, O AMERICA, AS MY WORDS ARE READ TO YOU NOW!

"Had I, Morgan Rockefeller, chosen to dispose of the property under my control by transferring it to another industrial autocrat, I would have perpetuated a system of selfishness. My life has been unselfish. It is not immodest for me to say none more unselfish than I ever lived except the Nazarene. I may say this because in the desolation and isolation which my position on the barren summit of wealth placed me, I have had neither the love nor the fellowship of my fellow men, and have lived a life of loneliness more complete than Cruso on his desert isle. My plan has been to consolidate all wealth and inaugurate a system of Democratic

Socialism. I have accomplished my purpose as to consolidation. I leave the rest to you."

CHAPTER XX.

THE NIECE OF THE KING.

The world looked very bright to Alden Lowell after his great exhibition of reflectors at Montraven Castle that afternoon in July. He cared very little for the fame which he had now achieved, for that had been so long in contemplation as to be both familiar and contemptible. He cared little for the plaudits of the multitude or the great politicians. He did, however, value very highly the applause of President Rockefeller and President Adams, but even that was of but slight importance as compared with the pleasure which he knew the Lady Harvester of the Reapers would feel on learning of his reinstatement and success.

But his elation was doomed to end in confusion and gloom. His effort to get the Lady Harvester at the Watertown Standard by telephone, failed. He could neither reach that young lady nor Mrs. Locksley, her guardian. The next day he received two shocks which threw him into a condition of despair. It must be admitted, however, that the death of President Rockefeller was a circumstance of comparatively slight importance to Alden. The disappearance of Helen Channing was almost terrifying. He could not account for it. He was informed that abduction had been suggested, and there was no other theory which appealed to him.

But why should anybody wish to abduct a young lady who could not possibly have any enemies? He bethought himself of her association with the fraternal order, "The Reapers", and his own experience as one under suspicion, but he was sufficiently acquainted with the Standard system to know that, whatever men might believe or rumor might allege, its methods were not in violation of the law. When it wanted to pursue a course which was found to be unlawful, it invariably, in these days, abandoned such course until it could get the law changed. Abduction was out of the range of its possibilities.

President Adams had, shortly after the decease of President Rockefeller, requested Alden to call at the Executive Mansion. The subject was the possibility of installing mirage reflectors for use at the reading of the Rockefeller will. Incidentally the President referred to the deceased President's niece who was supposed to be somewhere in the vicinity of Boston.

"I am sure," said Alden, "I do not recall that any person by the name of Rockefeller lived in Boston or its suburbs in my time. It seems to me I would have heard of it for no doubt society would have been clamorous for her presence."

"But," quickly declared President Adams, looking surprised, "her name was not Rockefeller. Mr. Rockefeller's sister married a gentleman of New England descent who had some revolutionary ideas. They had a daughter whom they named Helen and they, shortly after, died. The one weak thing in Mr. Rockefeller's life was his determination not to see this niece, and although he provided for her and placed her in the charge of a reliable person who was in the mother's family, yet he remained a stranger to her and she to him."

Alden had turned pale during the President's recital and seemed quite agitated.

"But you have failed to state her last name, Mr. President," he exclaimed.

"Oh! Did you not know that the name of the niece was Channing? Helen Channing?" The President was also surprised.

"Your Excellency," said Alden with agitation, "I know her well. Never did I suspect that she was the niece of the President of Standard."

It was now the President's turn to be agitated. He whirled his chair around to face Alden and leaned forward.

"You know her, Alden? You know her! Where is she then?"

Alden then related all he knew of Helen and her residence in Watertown. He told about her association with the Baptist church, but never a word about her connection with the Reapers of the World. Then he explained his efforts to reach the Watertown Hotel by telephone and his inability to have Miss Channing placed on the line.

"I did learn from the lady in charge of the Watertown Standard," he continued, "it was suspected by Mrs. Locksley and her friends that the lady had been seized on one of her walks in the country and was, perhaps, being held for ransom."

"That may be," assented the President, "as she is now a great heiress. Still, we have no proof, no clue. The Boston police, Standard's police and all the forces of the nation are searching for her. By the way, Alden," the President had assumed quite a familiar manner toward the young man, "can't you put the reflector into service to find her?"

"Indeed, I could, Your Excellency, if I had any intimation of her whereabouts."

The time of the President was, of course, very valuable and the interview with Alden had to be brought to a close. Arrangements were made for the latter, not only to set in motion the machinery which would manufacture and distribute the Mirage Reflector, but also to search everywhere to find the stolen girl.

But Alden did not feel elated over the discovery that Miss Channing was a Rockefeller and the heiress. Although he had never spoken to her about the state of his mind toward her, yet he had begun to realize that she was pretty well bound up in his life, or rather that his life was pretty well bound up in hers. But the fact that she was heir to everything and likely to be entitled to exercise dominion over him also, seemed to place a gulf between them which looked impassable. He went to his quarters in Montraven Castle feeling that the world was gloomy enough.

When he arrived at the grand entrance, there stepped out from the crowd, which always waits around that famous gate, a little, thin man whom he thought he had seen somewhere before. The little man spoke to him.

"Mr. Lowell," said he, taking off his hat and appearing quite deferential, but not in the least abashed, "may I speak to you a few minutes?"

Alden was not in a confidential or even gracious mood.

"I am in a hurry," he growled, without stopping. He had an unpleasant impression in his mind of something which he could not quite recall.

"I wish to talk with you," persisted the man, still preserving his deferential but unabashed manner, "about Miss Helen Channing. I am just in from Boston." Alden stopped short and caught the little man almost roughly by the shoulder.

"What do you know of her?" he demanded in a gruff whisper.

"I can not tell you here," was the answer. "I am a detective, and have been at work on the case since the night of her disappearance. Let us go into the castle."

Placing his hat back on his head the little detective walked on with Alden, who had not lessened his pace.

"Can you get in?" asked Alden pointing ahead.

"I have the freedom of the castle," answered the detective. "I have passports also," he continued.

They went in silently, ascended to Alden's apartments and entered.

"Now," demanded Alden as he turned on the lights, "your name, please?"

"Moreland Hughes, Boston, Massachusetts," responded the detective.

It should be stated here that, since he discovered that Miss Helen Channing was a member of the Reapers, having learned in the course of business that she was Morgan Rockefeller's niece and only heir, his views had greatly changed, not only with regard to Alden and Helen, but also with regard to Fraternal Societies, or rather with regard to the Reapers of the World. It was his firm belief that the young lady would inherit the entire continent from her uncle, and that it would be a good stroke of policy to join the Fraternal order which was her pet society. More than this, he had made some investigations, and they had been so far successful that he knew and understood what the Reapers believed, and had come to be something of a Fraternalist himself.

"Do you know, Mr. Hughes, where Miss Channing is?" asked Alden.

"I do not, but I have some information which may furnish a clue," began Hughes.

The detective then told of his efforts to gather evidence in and around Watertown relating to the heiress of the Rockefellers, and her disappearance; how he had not been able to find any person who had any recollection of seeing a young lady answering the description of Miss Channing that evening except a boy who was too young to be credited. But the little boy had told him that while he was running home from a neighbor's house after dark he saw what looked like a lady in the darkness. He was walking very fast and quite a distance ahead. He saw some men, he thought they were men, rush out and surround her. He couldn't say how many there were, but they made no noise and she didn't even scream. They threw a sheet or blanket over her. He had thrown himself face down in the grass and was frightened almost to death. What became of these people he didn't know, but he lay there on his face a long time and, when he recovered courage, he went home.

"Now," continued Hughes, "I have found that some strange looking men were seen about the streets of Watertown that day, several of whom looked like Mexicans. I have found that persons in the vicinity of Lynn, Salem and the cities on Cape Ann, saw a company of strangers pass through those cities, keeping to the most unfrequented roads. They say that some of them were Mexicans and that they rode in autos. They do not mention seeing a lady with them. A small winged ship was in the offing near Rockport for several days and this disappeared the day following the disappearance of Miss Channing. I believe that the young lady has been seized by the outlaw, Phil Jamieson, and his band who have their rendezvous at Medellin, in the Little Andes in the Interior of Colombia, South America, and that the seizure has been made because they knew she was the Rockefeller heir and that Rockefeller would pay a large ransom to rescue her."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE REFLECTOR AND THE DETECTIVE.

The detective's statement was far from satisfactory, but it was at least suggestive. Alden and he were long together that evening discussing the methods to be employed for solving the mystery which perplexed and distressed them. It was agreed that on the next day, five days from the departure of the ship from the coast of Cape Ann, the mirage chamber would be called into requisition. It was the opinion of Hughes that if his conclusions were correct, allowing for the rapid flight of the ship and the inaccessibility of the Andes to conveyances of that description and the necessity which the captors would find, for traveling on horseback on all interior trails in Colombia, Jamieson would be somewhere on the great trail from Porto Berrio to Medellin.

Early in the afternoon Alden and Hughes met in the Mirage Chamber, and Alden lost no time in adjusting his reflector to search for the lost maiden. In order to do this it was necessary to ascertain the latitude and longitude of Porto Berrio. This having been done, the reflector was put in motion and the atmosphere prepared by the use of chemicals and lights.

Thereupon the Medellin trail appeared. High above the torrential Nus, and its miasmatic valley along the slopes of the Little Andes, its narrow length and winding way stretched westward to the towering peaks beyond. A profusion of tropical foliage, bewildering flowers, jungles whose every branch and tree were intertwined and intertwined again with deathless vines, burst upon the view. Snow clad mountains rose to touch the sky. Groves of orange and cocoanut spread down the slopes to hide beneath the valley's lake of mist. The trail built by the Spanish conquerors at a date which makes Plymouth's foundation seem a modern incident, is a marvel of life and traffic. Day by day the strange, motley, burden-bearing hordes of tropical humanity push and crowd to and from the city of trade and pleasure.

Such a scene of ill regulated commerce belongs to the middle ages, not to well ordered and systematized civilization. An army of mules, heavy laden, but broken up into a multitude of small bands, jostle one another, and wreck many a cargo on the way up and down the steep declivities along the road to Medellin. Black and brown peons, negro and Indian, with backs burdened with freight, climb the cliffs barefooted. Women of many tribes, brief skirted, shoeless and dark eyed, with forms toughened by exposure and faces wrinkled with work and worry, balance big bundles on steady heads without aid of hand or cord. Gay cavalcades of well dressed and handsome men and ladies, mounted on dashing steeds, move proudly along the great highway to Medellin. On this road no wheel may turn for the constant tramp of heavy beasts of burden has worn deep ruts in the way and equestrians must lift the stirrup high, in many places, to avoid being caught in the narrow walls.

This is what Alden and Hughes saw. But not yet did anything suggest in that strange land the object of their search. All that day, in truth, until the sun refused to make mists and pictures in the chamber at Montraven, they scanned the road to Medellen. But their search was vain.

Next day they took up the work where it was left the day before.

Again the reflector brought to them the road to Medellin. The River in the Nus Valley where the boas are pets of native dwellers; La Florida, Christalis, San Roche, Santo Domingo, Hiradota, all were reproduced in the chamber to the vigilant eyes of the youth and the officer. But no train of lawless riders appeared along the way.

They were almost convinced that there would be no relief offered in this quarter, when the level road beyond Hiradota came within the scene. The trail was now no longer in the mountains. Nearly two hundred mles of it, two hundred miles of thirst and breathless heat, two hundred miles of wilderness and barren peaks relieved by quaint old Spanish towns and Inca rest-houses, had been scanned. Now the smooth, level road became an avenue on the polished banks of the beautiful Porce river. Vast and precipitous hill-sides, denuded of forest and devoted to the culture of corn or cane, or used as grazing fields for white cattle which looked like little spots of snow against a green background, rose on either side of the river and road. White ribbons of water seemed to leap from the sky and drop great distances below the hill tops in their hurry to reach the Porce.

The scene was so entrancing that even Alden and Hughes, despite their intense anxiety, could not forbear to remark its beauty. But here the busy life has taken on that settled character which denotes the approach to a great city. The road is no longer a trail but a broad avenue. Many trails have entered it and new forms of industry appear. Gay cavalcades of richly dressed ladies and gentlemen are more in evidence now. In addition to those features which distinguished the trail across the divides, little children are seen, barefooted, and with straight black hair and swarthy complexions, bearing burdens braced by bands across forehead and around waist, while stalwart Indian women carry great bundles of faggots on their heads. In that hot climate fuel is not for warmth but only for the oven.

And as they viewed this great multitude moving toward the city, a company, which had entered the avenue from one of the lesser trails, challenged their attention. It was composed of horsemen, all appareled in khaki, and after the fashion of the rough riders of Roosevelt's time. There were at least forty riders and they moved forward with a regularity suggestive of discipline, two by two, twenty leading, then a covered car like the riksha of the Japanese, borne by four stout, barefooted peons, then the twenty horsemen ranged two by two, and apparently acting as a rear guard. The leader, white haired and gray bearded, rode a coal black horse, and if, in place of the peaked panama, a crown had adorned his head, might have been mistaken for one of the kings of antiquity who had somehow been able to escape from his position in some old picture.

It was impossible to discover what the car contained. The company of horsemen came on into the mirage chamber and moved with their mysterious charge along the broad avenue which entered Medellin. Several times Alden placed himself in front of the moving figures, but he could find no solution of the mystery of the car, and the fact that the cavalcade accompanying moved slowly and that everywhere as they approached, the people received them with respect, caused both Alden and Hughes to think that the leader was, perhaps, a great dignitary of the Hermit republic.

As they watched, suddenly a single horseman came galloping at full speed up to the leader and as he checked his steed and seemed to speak to him, the whole cavalcade stopped. The curtain of the car was moved aside and Alden caught sight of a face, the face of a lady, but so languid and listless was its expression that he would have concluded at once not to continue his quest further in that direction, only on closer inspection he felt sure there was something familiar about the form and manner which he could not define. The curtain was parted scarcely a second and then closed. The cavalcade moved on faster, the porters carrying the car stepped into a trot and the horsemen urging their horses forward at the same pace. The cavalcade was just entering the City of Medellin when the tropical night fell suddenly and the reflector refused to continue the scene.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE ABDUCTION.

It is hardly necessary to amplify the description given by the boy whom Hughes quoted when he related the facts upon which he based his suspicion that Phil Jamieson, in North America called the outlaw, in South America known as the head of the Liberal Party in Colombia, had secured possession, by violence, of the person of Morgan Rockefeller's only legal heir.

What the boy saw, what the mirage suggested, and what Hughes concluded, were all true and even the victim of the assault, the seizure and the captivity, could not have given a fuller account. All Helen Channing knew was that while she was out in the country near her home, somewhat belated and in the darkness, in a lonely and secluded place, a blanket or muffler of some kind was suddenly thrown over her and she was seized and overpowered. She was neither able to resist nor cry out and was just conscious that an anaesthetic was being administered before she lost consciousness, altogether.

When she regained consciousness she was in a covered automobile which was moving very rapidly. She had no companion and there was no opening through which she could see the country. Her first thought was to jump out blindly regardless of consequences.

But she soon found that she could not release herself from the chains which bound her securely, around the waist and ankles, to the carriage.

The auto moved rapidly, flew in fact, until it came to a stop in a wild place on the shores of the ocean. She had no idea where they were. Four large, powerful men opened the carriage door, unfastened the chains and with a politeness and grace of manner, not possible in ordinary ruffians, and with a gentleness not associated with restraint, asked her to kindly accompany them to the boat near by. It was evident that these men were ready to compel her to accompany them despite their gentle manner. She besought them to explain. They assured her that she was in no danger and that she would be treated with the highest consideration, but that circumstances required them to insist on her going with them. They begged her to go quietly as they would wish not to use force.

"Believe me, young lady," said the man who seemed to be in charge and whose face was as kindly in expression as his manner was in gentleness, "your safety and honor I will defend with my life, if necessary."

She saw no alternative, and entering the boat, was conveyed to a winged ship which lay some distance off the shore. Almost immediately on her being placed aboard, the ship weighed anchor and made for the open sea. Her surroundings would have been comfortable if she had not been distressed by the terror of her misfortune. She was a prisoner and could neither understand why, nor what her destination was. Yet she was closely watched that she might not be in want or do violence to herself. Now that she was, in a measure, certain that she was a prisoner and yet that for some reason she was not only in no danger personally, but that her captors were anxious about her welfare, Helen had no thought of desperate expediencies, for she had a courage which belongs only to those who look for the good in life and not for the evil and who believe that truth and not error overcomes.

She did not know the direction the winged ship took. The air, however, became, in the course of time, oppressively sultry. She saw a great many islands as they proceeded. Books and evidences of refinement were all around in her stateroom. On the monotonous waste of the ocean she read much, although her agitation was still such that this occupation could not be long sustained.

At last they arrived at a shore which she knew from the sultry heat and the foliage of the trees, more particularly the palm groves, was in the tropical south. Up a great river they ploughed. The current was swift and the banks were inhabited by a people who were nearly or quite savage. Even when they passed towns the inhabitants came out on the riverside and the children were naked and grown people were nearly so. Interminable banks of vegetation, vast forests whose trunks were covered with a dense mass of flowering vines, stood high on either side and above them a great tree which spread its foliage from the summit of a tall column like an umbrella. She had never seen the far south before, but now she knew she was in the tropics. But where?

She questioned one of her guards.

"I shall be pleased to serve Senorita in every way," he said, bowing and smiling as only a Latin can bow and smile, "but I am prohibited from giving answers to questions affecting your whereabouts."

She did not seek information again. She would have given the world to be able to communicate with Mrs. Locksley whom she loved as a mother. She feared that the Reapers would suffer in the absence of the Lady Harvester. She thought of the certain agitation of Mr. Alden Lowell, whom she felt a deep interest in, a deeper interest than she had been able to define.

Finally they reached a miserable little town on the bank, composed of huts of adobe, at which they disembarked. There was a machine shop here and some of the running gear of the ship had become so worn that its wings and wheels were inoperative. Quite a party of horsemen came down to meet the boat and Helen was carried in a car, which four peons bore on their shoulders by means of poles, to a hotel. Helen understood that the people spoke Spanish and she suspected that they were in South America. But she was not able to talk with anyone, only the women, she observed, were ready to fall at her feet, while the men stood apart and eyed her with curiosity.

The heat was constant night and day and enervating. She had become affected by it so that she felt quite indifferent to her surroundings and wanted to sleep. Indeed, she spent most of her time in partly conscious slumber. The polite Latin, smiling and bowing, assured her, calling her Senorita, that she would soon be acclimated.

She was extremely tired and almost sick before she arrived at the place where, unknown to her, Alden found her with the mirage reflector. She had been allowed some liberty since they began to climb the great mountain trail and could put aside the curtains and look around. This she did frequently, but the sleepy condition, the sultry heat and the lack of knowledge as to where she was, destroyed her curiosity.

It was dark when they came into the narrow streets of Medellin.

Again she put aside the curtains and saw crowds of people in the doorways and on the balconies. The occasion seemed of great moment to them. She closed the curtain again and wished that she might enjoy a breath of cool air.

The escort of horsemen moved through several streets and at last stopped. Helen opened the curtains of her car and found that they were now in front of a large building which, facing on the narrow street, without windows, had the appearance of being a wall, yellow and forbidding. A gateway opened and the horsemen and peons carrying her car passed into a large inner court which, while it had a well paved street extending through was, for the most part, a most luxuriant and beautiful flower garden. She realized that she was in a palace of Spanish architecture, and for the first time since her captivity, felt interested. Her Latin attendant came to her, as had been his custom at every stopping place, and politely and respectfully assisted her to alight, saying that her destination had now been reached. The car having been removed the horsemen went forward and were soon lost to sight.

A gracious and stately lady wearing a rich mantella came forward and greeted Helen in Spanish, but, although Helen had some acquaintance with the language, she scarcely recognized it as spoken in this country. The Latin attendant addressed the lady as Senora and informed Helen that she would show her every attention.

The Senora conducted her charge to a large room on the second floor which was well lighted and which was quite luxurious and gave her to understand that it was to be hers. The atmosphere here was very warm but far more refreshing than she had experienced for some days.

CHAPTER XXIII.

GENERAL JAMIESON.

For the first time Helen felt some of the pleasures of freedom. Still her perplexity was distressing. She had no idea why she was brought into this unknown and isolated country. She could not understand why she should be restrained, or what her doom might be. Still, she was fully convinced that she was in no personal danger, but that some mistake had been made, and that her captors must assuredly have intended to gain possession of some other person.

She slept soundly that night. Early in the morning a female attendant, whose dusky skin and large brown, sad eyes disclosed her Indian character, brought black coffee. Bitter as it was, Helen had begun to relish it as one of the beverages of the country. The girl was able to understand a little English and Helen availed herself of the opportunity to ask a few questions.

The girl's name was Inez. Her mistress was Senora Jamieson, wife of General Jamieson. Her master was a very great man and very brave. All the people of Antiochia would be willing to die for him, and he was free to do whatever he chose, although he held no office. He was a very rich man, too, but hated North America and Morgan Rockefeller. Inez informed Helen that she, Inez, was sent to serve her as an attendant. She also said that they were allowed to go where Helen desired if they did not leave the city.

At eleven o'clock a light breakfast was served in the room, after which Helen, accompanied by Inez, went out into the court, which was a perfect revelation of floral beauty and artistic arrangement. Helen was gradually becoming inured to captivity. She had been supplied with the clothing of the country, for when she persistently declined to ask for anything, abundance was showered upon her. She wanted for none of the material necessities of life, but partook of them sparingly, with the vague idea that she must not place herself under obligations to people who had thus violently transported her to a foreign land.

Toward evening a note was brought by Inez, couched in English, saying that General and Mrs. Jamieson would call on her that evening at eight o'clock.

When the hour arrived, the General and Mrs. Jamieson, the latter being the stately Spanish lady whom she had seen the preceding evening, came as promised. The General was far from looking like what Helen had pictured an outlaw to be. He was tall, erect, and well proportioned. He had the manner and appearance of a polished gentleman. His white hair and long, flowing white beard added to his natural dignity, and a kindly smile played on his lips and twinkled in his gray eyes.

"Miss Channing," he said as he entered the room with his wife, the latter assuming to introduce them, "I hope you will be able to find diversion and comfort in these rooms and in our beautiful city of Medellin."

Helen had barely risen from her chair and received them indifferently. She did not even invite them to be seated.

"I believe you are General Jamieson," she said. "I have heard of you."

"And you have heard nothing good, I know," returned the general, smiling.

"Nothing!" assented Helen shortly.

"Well, Miss Channing," began the General, offering his wife a seat, and taking one himself while he beckoned to Helen to do likewise, "let us get better acquainted. You are here under circumstances which will not incline you to feel kindly toward us. Perhaps, after awhile you will feel differently. That you may be at ease, I think it proper to let you know now that I am well acquainted with your history and know that you have been kept in ignorance of your true position. You suppose yourself to be a comparatively humble person. You are not. I believe I am the first, am I not, to say that you are the sole heir of Morgan Rockefeller, President of Standard, and the owner of all North America?"

Helen stared at the speaker in amazement. She did not deign to speak. The statement struck her as doubly absurd, particularly as she reflected that she was pledged to fight the magnate through the Reapers of the World. General Jamieson noted the attitude of the young lady and seemed rather to relish it, while his eyes surveyed her as an artist who appreciates a fine picture and admires a beautiful woman. The stately woman by his side, whose beauty was still striking, although she did not understand fully what was being said, was conscious of its purpose and the effect it had.

The General continued:

"Years ago I was in possession of an independent business and fortune in the City of New York, and Morgan Rockefeller's father, Aldrich Rockefeller, ruthlessly crushed my business, and in so doing reduced me to poverty. I thought it was an effrontery for him to offer me a place as director in the enterprise which I had been compelled to surrender, and I swore eternal enmity to him and his. My bitterness was increased by the fact that the misfortune did not affect me alone but broke the heart of my widowed mother. I refused his insulting offer of position and made haste to abjure the country. I had not a dollar in it, not a place in it, not an opportunity in it, and not a hope in it. I therefore fled to Colombia. You have heard, no doubt, that I did not hesitate to appropriate forcibly all I needed to subsist on and to aid me in my flight hither. I gathered around me many bold spirits, who elected me their leader. In Colombia I and my American associates have been strictly upright according to the old school. But whenever I can, I have laid tribute on your uncle and have now caused his only heir to be brought to me that I may do for Antiochia, my chosen state, what nations feel proud of doing for themselves at another's expense—demand tribute and enrich her. Morgan Rockefeller shall pay a large ransom for you, or if he fails, it is very likely, in case of his death, you will be glad to favor Antiochia with a donation."

The General spoke earnestly, but without gesticulating, as is the habit of the South. Only the smile faded from his lips and the twinkle died out of his eye. But he spoke in a low, mild and almost gentle tone, which did not give offense. However, it was plain enough that he spoke like one whose passion consumed him.

"Your uncle," he resumed again, "has reduced all North America to slavery, but I think the Coloradans will rouse the whole nation against him and, perhaps, restore the Democratic rule. If I were younger, I would enlist in the service of their General Masterson. But at seventy-two a man must remain at home."

He paused again. Helen still sat looking at him without speaking.

There was a rap at the door. Inez answered the tap, and as the general finished his expression of approval of the Colorado war, she brought him a letter which she placed in the General's hands.

"Pardon, Miss Channing," he said, "it is a matter of pressing importance. I will read the missive with your permission."

He did not wait for her permission, however, but tore the envelope open and hurriedly scanned the contents of the note. Then, without changing his manner, he passed the note, evidently a wireless telegram, to his wife. When she had finished she looked up at him in speechless astonishment.

"This is very important information, Miss Channing," remarked the General turning again to Helen. "I would hesitate to announce it to you if I was not aware that, except for its relation to your personal fortune, the welfare of Mr. Rockefeller does not concern you. I will say to you, therefore, that this note apprises me of the death of Morgan Rockefeller and your accession by law to his vast estate."

If Helen had been without words before because of indifference or sentiment, she was now without them because of her surprise. She managed to say:

"Mr. Rockefeller dead!" Then suddenly recovering herself, she turned to General Jamieson and spoke in the low, rich tones of her musical voice.

"I am not expected, surely, to credit anything which may be said to me by those who have criminally disregarded my rights. I have never heard that I was Morgan Rockefeller's neice and so I do not believe it. Neither do I have reason to believe that he is dead, but, even if he is, it can not concern me. No doubt his wealth will pass to another autocrat. You are mistaken, General Jamieson, you are entirely mistaken. You can never gain profits for your country from me, for I have very little and, even if you are correctly informed that Rockefeller is dead, that very little may go too. You, sir, spurned your country in its need, and declared vengeance because you suffered. I, on the contrary, love my country and, while I recognize its need as fully as you claim to, I shall not hope that you can bleed it or Masterson can make war upon it, but rather that the spirit of Jesus may enter into its system and purify and redeem it. Sir, I hope we may some day help to infuse into the American system the spirit of brotherly love which is the only remedy for all our economic ills."

The General listened to this address with evident interest. But when it was finished, he assured Helen that all he had said to her was true, and that he had made no mistakes. As the news was very important and made it incumbent on him to change some of his plans, it would be necessary for him to close the interview. He hoped, however, to renew it on the morrow, and he believed it might even be possible that he could be of service to her, whose position he regarded as that of the wealthiest and most powerful person in the world, on her return to the States.

He therefore withdrew with his wife, leaving Helen to her own excited thoughts, and to a sleepless night.

CHAPTER XXIV.

TWO EXTREMES.

Philip Jamieson was in many respects a great man. While he held no political office in Colombia, he was possessed of greater personal power than any man in that republic. His influence was always cast on the side of law and order within the nation, and he had, on several occasions, organized the army of the government against revolutionary assaults. In fact, it was fear of his power and genius which deterred many ambitious spirits from unworthy outbreaks. But Colombia, in 1990, was a transformation, so far as the political system was concerned, from Colombia of 1900. From a centralized republic it had become a federal republic. That is, the states retained independence except so far as they delegated certain powers to the government at Bogata. In 1990 the states had no powers except as they were conferred by the central government.

General Jamieson had derived great wealth from operating certain mines in the interior. Now, however, a very large part of his wealth had been depreciated by Morgan Rockefeller's order prohibiting the acceptance of gold as money. The General's stock of gold was still large, and at three dollars an ounce, he was rich. He was inclined to make common cause with Colorado, but reflected that his age prevented his leading his contingent, which consisted largely of bright and daring men whom he had helped to Colombia after they had been stricken from Standard's pay rolls. He had therefore determined on carrying into execution a strategic move by which he hoped to compel the great Rockefeller to change his gold order. This move was none other than to get possession of Rockefeller's heir, whose life history was well known to his paid emissaries in the States, and to surrender her only on terms.

But with all his scheming General Jamieson was a kind hearted man who would sacrifice his life for others, if need be. But he had a large mind and a large heart, and his sacrifices were never planned or proposed except for a large purpose. Although an individualist, and opposed to such a centralized and autocratic form of socialistic solidarity as that which the Standard had fastened on North America, yet, if justice, equality and happiness could be obtained for all, he would gladly resign any form of physical or material advantage which he possessed, and take his place as one of the masses.

He felt a genuine interest in Miss Helen Channing after his first meeting. He resolved that she should know him as he was and, if possible, that she should repose trust in him. It therefore occurred that he and his excellent wife were frequent callers at Helen's apartments and, in time, Helen, whose knowledge of Spanish was greatly increased by indefatigable application, called at the portion of the Jamieson palace which Mrs. Jamieson treated as her separate suite. In fact, in less than a week Helen felt somewhat at home and would not have deemed herself a prisoner if it had not been for the prohibition which prevented her sending mail beyond the gates of the palace and the absence of her friends at home. Mrs. Jamieson was really a most admirable companion and knew the history of her country as few others did.

The disposition of Helen made it possible for her to forget her personal wrongs whenever she had an interested and intelligent audience which was willing to listen to her as she discussed her favorite theme. General Jamieson soon discovered this and engaged her in conversation on the subject, not only because he wished to interest her, but because her views really appealed to him.

"Miss Channing," he said one evening, "the will of Rockefeller will be read in St. Louis in a few days now, and I shall hope that, when you become mistress of the continental estate of your deceased uncle, you will not forget altogether your beautiful theories on Fraternalism."

"You have not convinced me, General Jamieson," declared Helen, a look of annoyance returning to her face, "that I am concerned in that will. But even if what you insist were true, I would never surrender my conviction that the remedy for human ills was prescribed by the Christ who lived two thousand years ago. You tell me that Colombia is now developed to what the states were, politically, ninety years ago. Your people refuse to let the Rockefeller system gain a foothold. Yet your system is crude and your inhabitants make little progress. You have insisted on individualism and you accomplish little. You have no railroads, no great factories, no scheme of distribution. The backs of mules and men and the heads of women constitute your freight cars. Rockefeller's system would make your lives better, give you better roads, better schools, better communication, better distribution and a higher civilization. Co-operation alone will rescue Colombia from its wild state."

"There is freedom in this wilderness," interrupted the General. "There is nothing but slavery in North America under Rockefeller."

"But your wilderness and your freedom produce a few intellects which are worthy and a host of miserable, ignorant and impoverished individuals, half savage and half man, who live by turns in slavery and revolution. The only co-operation you have in this country is the army. In the States there is nothing but co-operation. The System produces the very best results and the very greatest intellects. But its defect is the same as yours, it lacks fraternity."

"What would you do to rescue Colombia?" asked the General. "How would you develop your fraternal ideas here?"

"I sometimes think," answered Helen thoughtfully, "that it would be easier to introduce them here than in the States. Here the army alone would be an obstacle. In North America the autocratic system works so satisfactorily to the masses who are a part of it, that it has become second nature to them. You have a population, you tell me, of ten millions. You have a total vote of one and one-half millions. Now you say that these are not intelligent enough to understand a fraternal system. But ten per cent of them surely are. If you should organize your one hundred and fifty thousand men and an equal number of women into a fraternal order, each to pay two dollars a month into a trust fund, that would be six hundred thousand dollars a month or seven million dollars a year. Adopt the well tried system of business incorporation which has developed North America, let your fraternal order own only the majority of the stock in them, and in a short time your ignorant operators will discover that the profits, rent and interest which they produce are being, to borrow the phrase of an early twentieth century writer, 'syphoned' in to the fraternal treasury. The great merit of your order will be 'the open door.' You allow any person to become a member whose moral character is good. You will not permit large local lodges, but limit the number of members of each lodge to five hundred, so that discussion and free speech will be general. This will be effective as an educator."

These conversations between the General and Helen brought a new light into the old General's life. He was not prepared to admit that it was practical, but declared on one occasion that it was better to live in such dreams than to indulge in "night mares," because the latter were practical, that is, possible.

The news reached Medellin by wireless that the will of Rockefeller had been read and that the entire estate had been devised to the government in trust for the people. General Jamieson was surprised. His plans did not contemplate such an event. He now found that, instead of having a great heiress in his possession, he merely had a very beautiful and intelligent young lady. He went with his senora that evening to call on Helen.

"I have rather bad news," he said.

"What may it be?" asked Helen thinking it concerned only himself.

"That your uncle's will has been read and that you are not his heir."

"Did I not tell you so?"

"Yes, but you can hardly guess to whom the estate goes?"

"It does not matter much. Did you not tell me that President Adams had rescinded the order which troubled Colorado, the order demonetizing gold?"

"Yes. And Colorado has returned to its master."

"Well. No matter who the heir is, the fraternal order, the 'Reapers of the World' will acquire the entire estate if gold continues to be money. That is Standard's weakness. Let her have a money of her own creation, and her power will last for centuries."

"But the will has given everything to the government in trust for the people. There you have democratic Socialism. There you have public ownership. Morgan Rockefeller has solved your economic problem."

Helen was astonished by this information.

"To the government!" she exclaimed. Then after a pause, during which she gazed at the General in amazement, she said: "Even so. Rockefeller who is greater than Caesar renders up all to Caesar. Do you not see? Rockefeller, the greatest exampler of commercialism, has rendered up to Caesar, the government, the greatest of politicians, the things which the politician is no more capable of handling than a disorganized mob."

The General laughed outright, both at the plain language and the earnestness of the young lady.

"Do you feel that you could have handled it better than the Government?" he asked with a tinge of irony in his voice, but with paternal kindness.

"No! No! General!" she hastened to say. "You cannot after all, be expected to understand. Standard is a business merger. It is cooperation's autocratic form of government for the industrial system. It is better than any political government can be for the business system and is an evolution from it. Your political government is nothing but an evolution of feudalism. It has always the weakness of vanity. Its power is as insignificant in comparison with the power of organized corporate government in the economic system of commerce as the power of picturesque barons and nobles. I saw an old paper in the museum the other day in Boston which told how King Edward and Emperor William met and kissed each other. That was vain show. It was hypocrisy. It certainly wasn't business and Judas was outdone. Imagine Rockefeller and Morgan meeting and kissing each other for business purposes. Commercial government, the government of the business system, doesn't require that. The old vanity has passed away in the States. Standard is the ideal government, only, instead of being a 'syphon' to direct the wealth into a few private pockets, it should be fraternalized so as to direct into the treasury of the fraternal all of that surplus wealth which includes interest, rent and profits."

General Jamieson was too good a man, although his methods were in some instances predatory, to undervalue the personal purity and intelligence of his captive guest. He was too wise a man not to make further complete inquiries and investigation into the situation of Helen's affairs in the States before reaching a final decision. He was too kind a man not to feel deeply interested in the welfare of one with whom he and Mrs. Jamieson had spent considerable time, and he resolved, even if the news of her disinheritance should prove true, to see that she would not come to want. But he did not disclose his thoughts and intentions to Helen.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE REVOLUTION.

The atmosphere of Colombia was ever surcharged with revolution. Masses of citizens in the midst of ill regulated and poorly distributed abundance were always ready to follow any leader who would voice a proclamation and provide "plantains."

Individualism was pronounced and competition was keen.

So pronounced and acute were they, that participants in the economic war, more properly called economic brigandage, wasted time, vitality and substance in non-essentials and a vainglorious effort to gain notoriety.

It was grand.

It made and strengthened character.

But what character!

It was artistic.

What other mission can art have than to produce perfection.

Here were perfect beggars.

Here were perfect thieves.

Here were perfect drones.

Here were perfect rascals.

Here were perfect robbers.

Here were perfect saints.

What a system.

Only competition could stir up every mean element in a man's nature so as to create these delightfully strong types.

Since Helen had become a captive in Colombia, some ten weeks, a change had occurred throughout the republic.

Revolution, which had been asleep and dreaming was now awake, and prepared to fight.

Yesterday's idols were today in contempt.

Beggars without hope were ready to take a chance in the game of change.

Why?

Neither they nor anybody knew.

The times were out of joint.

How?

Neither they nor anybody knew.

The system was wrong.

In what respect?

Neither they nor anybody knew.

What could be gained by the change?

Neither they nor anybody knew.

But the condition of most men could not be worse, It might accidently improve in the case of one, even if the rest went to destruction.

Each was ready for revolution on the theory that the one chance of prosperity might come to him.

So revolution blazed up suddenly and frightfully.

Every beggar who could get red tape for stripes on his overalls was ready to inlist. Plantain was cheap and abundant and money was necessary only to gamble with. But in Colombia, not to gamble is not to live.

Who lead this sudden revolution?

A new man had appeared on the scene.

Did anybody know who General Romero was?

He had been a ranchero. He had turned adventurer. The adventurer had become a soldier and the soldier had developed into a revolutionist and a general. Did anybody have proof of these facts? What matter? He had plenty of money and spent it freely. Old General Jamieson was too superannuated to cut any figure now. Someone else should have a chance. Why not Romero who had money to spend?

Death was better than beggary.

Off with the old revolution; on with the new.

The multitude in front of the cathedral and el Banco de Popular crowded into the pretty little plaza.

Incendiary speeches were punctuated by wild roars of approval.

Suddenly the sound of fire arms was heard in the distance.

The crowd vanished.

No one knew where it had gone for everybody was intent on saving himself. Even the speakers had disappeared and the silence of death prevailed, except for the rattle of musketry in the neighboring streets.

What was happening?

A company of revolutionists was approaching Medellin from Hiradota, east of the city. This was unusual. Engagements of this character in the city scarcely ever rose above the dignity of a riot.

The governor of Antiochia had sent a small detachment of soldiers from the barracks out to intercept the invaders.

This detachment had been driven back into the city. Thereupon the whole of the Colombian army stationed in the city was ordered out.

But the soldiers of two regiments mutinied and refused to obey orders. The army had been revolutionized, too, and as the invaders approached, instead of encountering opposition, they received reinforcements.

The revolutionists were victorious.

Dollars, not bullets, carried all before them.

The leaders were pushing toward General Jamieson's house.

Dollars had paved the way for Colombia's soldiers to march to the palace of their former chief.

It was wonderful how practical, or to be more specific, and speaking politically, how corrupt these patriots had become.

Dollars filled the air with gunpowder smoke and sent bullets and cannon balls against General Jamieson's palace gate.

Dollars battered down the barriers which the individuals had raised, and when Colombian soldiers, full of dollar inspiration, and the prospect of dollar ease, rushed through the battered gates into the court yard, even the courage and splendid skill of the old warrior and Democrat proved unavailing. There was treachery in the court, and this revolution which had been shrewdly and quietly planned and thus vigorously carried out, was the most effective and complete Colombia ever experienced.

Let us speak truly. It was the dollar behind the man which won the day.

General Jamieson was taken prisoner, and several of his most faithful retainers died defending him.

But what of Helen?

During the affray she had remained in her own apartments. The shutters of the windows which looked into the court were closed, but when the conflict was at its worst and noise of rifles and shouts of the victorious invaders was loudest, she opened the shutters slightly and looked out. She saw General Jamieson deprived of his arms and overpowered.

Her first impulse was to rush to the aid of this man who, in spite of the resentment which she still harbored, she felt had many traits of nobility. As she stood in the darkened room, listening intently, and not daring to look out again, she heard steps approaching along the stone paved corridor which led to her room. She recalled the fact that she had left the door unlocked and started forward to turn the key, but before she could do so the door flew open and the figure of a man stood looking in. The shutters being closed, the room was dark, but the person in the doorway moved in and pressed the button which turned on the light. There stood Helen, not afraid, but hopeless and desperate.

The man in the doorway was small of stature and slender. He was dressed in the uniform of high rank, but whether of the revolution or of old Colombia, Helen could not have told even if she had been able to think calmly. Behind him stood a much larger man, also in uniform.

In a high, shrill voice and in good English, the little man addressed her.

"Madam, I am General Romero, of the Liberal Army of Colombia. You must surrender yourself for you are my prisoner. General Gonzales, I place this lady under your charge and in your protection. Madam, you have nothing to fear."

The General's English was so much like that of a native of some English speaking country that even Helen, in the midst of her perplexity, remarked it.

"A Jamaican!" she thought.

She had expected nothing good and had anticipated everything bad. Now that she was face to face with one of the exigencies of war her heart stood still and she could not even cry out.

Colonel Gonzales stepped towards her.

She had not noticed him closely but now in the light, as she saw him advance and bow, she screamed and fainted.

Colonel Gonzales caught her in his arms as she fell fainting.

CHAPTER XXVI.

PRESIDENT ADAM'S PERPLEXITY.

As President Adams left the Senate Chamber after reading the Rockefeller will, he felt as if the world had gone all to pieces. It was as if the social order had been annihilated and a new system with which he was entirely unfamiliar, and the prospect of which he had always viewed with abhorrence, had been forced upon him. Like a man who had donned a hat ten sizes too large for him, he was groping in darkness beneath its crown.

No practical statesman was ever before confronted with so mighty a problem. He was not a dreamer, this descendant of stern unyielding Puritanic statesmen. He did not like dreams, and the more he considered the situation in which he found himself, the more it seemed like a dream. The will of Rockefeller was not merely unexpected, but was very distasteful to the President. He regarded it as either a very great and unaccountable mistake, on the part of his friend, or the product of an insane mind, and knowing Mr. Rockefeller as he thought he did he was inclined to the belief that this strange and inexplicable testament was the impulse of mental aberration. Yet he also knew that he, Josiah Quincy Adams, either in his individual capacity or in his capacity as President of the United

States, would never be able to impress his belief on the people of the United States or to have this will set aside.

He held himself accountable for a great blunder. He should have known the contents of that will before he consented to read and publish it to the nation. President Adams was an upright and thoroughly conscientious man, but he did not trust public judgment at all, and he belonged to a school of high minded statesmen who were in the habit of educating the people to certain views by degrees. Had he known the contents of Rockefeller's will, he would have delayed the publication, and in the meantime would have caused all the public prints to suggest, very gently at first, very emphatically at last, the incapacity of Rockefeller to make a will. He would have caused the most vigorous articles to appear in every issue of all the daily papers against state or public socialism and would have supplemented such arguments with secret instructions to every postmaster, every public official, every superintendent of a farm, factory or railroad, to educate the common working classes along the lines suggested by the public prints. Then in due time he would have caused the will to be read when he could be reasonably certain it would be received with disapproval.

But now his blunder in not pursuing such a course weighed heavily upon him. The people had heard the will and had their opportunity to think before he and his wise associates could properly educate them and mould their opinions. He could not now make them believe Rockefeller was insane. It was too late. He also knew that no court or jury would dare to pronounce him insane or to impeach his will on any ground. Such a court would never be able to survive the storm of popular indignation if it reached such a conclusion.

The more he thought of it the more the President felt that a misfortune worse than civil war had befallen his beloved country. He was not, however, the man to despair. He wanted time to think. He was a believer in precedents. He wanted to examine them. Not that he expected to find a situation in history like that in which he was placed, but he could determine what human nature would submit to by observing what it had submitted to in the past.

When he arrived at the Executive Mansion, he found a large number of the country's most famous statesmen awaiting his arrival. They, too, were anxious about the future. To these he spoke with great confidence and professed to be overcome by the magnificence and patriotism of the deceased magnate.

His confident bearing reassured them, but it was plain enough that they, too, entertained serious misgivings as to the outcome of the revolutionary change about to occur. The situation demanded a cabinet meeting and in response to their request, such a meeting was called for the following day. Hon. William C. Endicott, a descendant of that William Crowninshield Endicott, who was Secretary of War in the eighties in the former century, was President Adam's Secretary of War.

President Adams and Secretary Endicott spent the evening together.

"Endicott," said the President, as they sat together in the latter's library in the Executive Mansion, "is not this situation political socialism of the very worst kind? I never anticipated such an issue, especially from such a source. Do you remember the socialist leader, Bristow, who was a candidate for President in 1952? That was forty years ago. I understand that he is still alive and very clear headed and wise. How would it do for us to hunt up the old man and have a talk with him tonight?"

Endicott was as much opposed to state or political socialism as the President, but under the circumstances was not averse to an adventure. He was the youngest member of the cabinet and not without some lingering traces of sentiment in his make-up.

"If we go disguised, I am ready," he said, with a mildly derisive smile on his lips. "I don't believe in Bristow or any form of Socialism."

It did not take long for the two distinguished gentlemen to lay aside any evidence of distinction which might attract attention to them. If any one had thought it worth while to follow the portly, middle-aged gentleman and the young man who accompanied him, both attired like well-to-do officials of some Standard Corporation, through the crowded streets of the capital city, they would not have recognized the President of the United States and his proud aad aristocratic Secretary of War.

It was a wonderful scene which St. Louis presented in those days of partial radium illumination. The lighted streets where little stars emitted beams which flooded the thoroughfare with white light in a succession of shining worlds, were crowded with a prosperous and happy people. Here the scientific correctness of economic government, autocratic to be sure, but not oppressive to its faithful servants, removed from the multitude the hope of sudden and dazzling preferment, and accustomed mankind to moderation and contentment. Here the game of chance was gone and in its place a light-hearted security which overflowed with innocent gayety. Paris was never gayer with all its dissipations, but the gayety of St. Louis in 1990 was healthy, temperate and simple. Girls and boys, men and women, graybeards and ancient matrons, all wore the smile of appreciation in Rockefeller's favored capitol. "There is no government like an absolute monarchy (economic despotism) if the king be a good and wise man." Such had come to be the universal belief. But St. Louis tonight was subdued and unusually quiet, even in the shining streets. Gayety was there, but more quietly manifested. It was not fear which produced this change. The people could not be said to be thinking. They were in a maze of wonderment. "What next?" was the universal thought—the universal question.

Through the light, out of the light, into the dark side avenue, up a stairway in the old building where the radium lights did not shine—the two men of power went and after some groping about, finally ventured to rap on a door dimly seen in the meagre light of an oil lamp.

The door opened. An old man, poorly clad, white head and beard, bent form, appeared.

"Mr. Bristow, I am W. C. Endicott, Secretary of War. This," the Secretary pointed to the portly President Adams, "is my friend, John A. Andrew of

Massachusetts. We would be glad to have a talk with you, if you are at leisure."

"Come in, come in, gentlemen," said the old man, turning to place chairs for his visitors. "Always glad to see and talk with the people."

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE LIFE THAT FADED.

John R. Bristow was over ninety years old. Born with the twentieth century, he was one of the most remarkable of its children. For ten years prior to 1952 he was the guiding star of the socialist party and the most forceful and beloved of all its orators. In 1952 he was his party's nominee for president and was defeated by a narrow margin. His adherents alleged that he was cheated out of the election by the corrupt practices of the Standard Oil Company. Some urged a resort to arms as a method of inducting him into office. Bristow was not averse to such a course, for he was a man of strong, positive character, and would have led an attack on his opponent fearlessly enough, if the army and supplies had been available. But the Standard Oil Company had all the money and supplies and the people were not in distress. So no army and supplies came to hand, and Bristow and the socialist party being just like human beings in every age and clime, did what human beings have always done, submitted, subsided and finally disbanded. The business system had conquered, and although it was a monopolistic system, and in its war against competition produced some distress, as it was the best system the people knew anything about practically, no serious disturbances occurred and the grim old world went whirling to its fate.

Bristow, however, was too great a man to become soured by defeat. Although he had lived for forty years in retirement, and although he no longer had a mission to perform, life was still good to him and he lived it. But the great man of action of 1940-52 had, in 1990, become the great man of thought. The leader of material units of former years was now a philosopher whose life was thought. Like the dark man of destiny—the hero of Austerlitz and the prisoner of St. Helena—his words in exile and isolation were greater than his acts as revolution's man of iron and death.

Bristow was no part of Standard's system. He was no part of any system. He had written his autobiography and Standard had printed it. Had it been other than philosophical, it would still have commended itself to Standard's consideration. Thousands of people remembered Bristow and the book sold well. Nothing could disturb Standard and it feared no theories or visions. Bristow derived a fair income from the book, but spent it all in relieving such cases of misfortune as came under his notice. He did not relieve the deserving. As a business proposition Standard looked after what it called deserving cases. Bristow helped a few of the miserable undeserving—on the theory that as all were responsible for all the bad conditions which produced sin in all ages—he was in duty bound to help them.

"To what may I attribute this call, gentlemen?" asked the old campaigner, as he seated himself.

"You are aware, Mr. Bristow," began the Secretary, "that a singular and unusual thing has occurred."

"You refer to the will of Rockefeller giving all his property to the United States?"

"Precisely." answered the Secretary. "You are a Socialist. What do you think as to the wisdom of Rockefeller's course. It has been reputed that you and he were the extremes of thought. Now it would appear that he entertained your views. He was a Democratic Socialist after all."

"Yes," answered Bristow, dryly. "He was an autocratic socialist during his life and a Democratic Socialist after death." After a short pause during which he looked at his visitors searchingly and yet not unkindly, he said, "But what does it matter to an old man like me what Morgan Rockefeller has done! It is merely one of many startling incidents in my long life. Every turn has been a surprise. Nothing can be or ever is anticipated. What do you gentlemen wish me to say?"

President Adams had remained silent as he had no wish to disclose his identity. To visit the defeated candidate of former years was not undignified so long as he remained incognito. He allowed the Secretary to conduct the conversation.

"Mr. Bristow, we would like to have you tell us what you would do, if you were now president and the will had made you executor to carry out its provisions." The Secretary spoke rather low.

"I think I understand you"—Bristow put one hand up to his ear. "I am a little deaf—for I am quite old. I do not feel called upon to decide such a question as you propound. In the political system which my success would have created—no such sudden and revolutionary change would have occurred."

"But could you not," persisted the Secretary, "could you not imagine yourself in this position and, as a Democratic Socialist, advise us as to how Democratic Socialism will handle the situation?"

"Mr. Endicott, I do not think a system of Democratic Socialism can ever succeed. Democratic Socialism was once the light by which my life was guided. I take it, gentlemen, because Mr. Endicott is the President's Secretary of War, that the President also is perplexed. Well, he may be. He will find the constitutional system of the government entirely incapable of handling this vast property. Once I believed that the government should own everything. I am older now and wiser, and know that political government is merely a sort of a bodyguard of the economic system. Mr. Rockefeller was no doubt a sincere believer in Democratic Socialism as I was formerly. Gentlemen, I have progressed beyond that theory. I am still a Socialist—that is, I still belive that before God's purpose for the human race shall be entirely revealed and the race shall become what he intends—Socialism must supercede all other systems. Rockefeller was a business or economic Socialist in practice. He made millions work together for his advancement. Caesar was a Socialist, too, only Caesar's Socialism made many hundred thousand soldiers work and fight together for the establishment of his empire."

The President was interested. He was surprised to hear this man whom he had been taught to look upon with abhorrence and almost hatred, express such modified views. He could not forbear to enter into the conversation.

"Mr. Bristow," said he, "your analysis is good, but can you give us a practical solution of the great problem before us? You have meditated on these subjects long and profoundly. What should President Adams do?"

"President Adams must remember that Government Socialism can never be successful. No system can be unless it is an outgrowth rather than a creation. Systems are developed through countless years of experiment and cannot be forcibly revolutionized. If its activities are stopped by violence or otherwise, chaos results and the reorganization means a return to that system which men understand. Society will perfect itself, but those who work for its uplifting must be satisfied to have the patience of God. Let President Adams do the best he can. If he seeks a government for the great system different from that which it has created for itself, he will make a complete and dismal failure. We Socialists believe the economic system develops its own government and that no other form is fit for it. In other words, the economic system is the primary consideration, the government of that system is a secondary consideration."

"You think then," said the President, "that Mr. Rockefeller's plan of uniting the political and economic in one system must fail?"

"I think it will destroy both the political and the economic. Give the economic system to the government and the government will be overburdened, overborne and overcome. President Adam's government during Rockefeller's life was only a shadow. After Rockefeller's death it will, if this plan of having it merge the economic is carried out, become a disaster."

President Adams was visibly affected. Had Bristow's eyes been clear he would have noticed that his visitor's face turned deathly pale.

"What is to be done?" almost gasped the President in a low and subdued voice.

"Sir," exclaimed Bristow, turning toward Mr. Adams with a note of earnestness in his voice, "I said to you that Socialism in some form will continue until God will have his way. In another decade two thousand years will have passed since a remedy for all human ills was given to man. God sent his only begotten son to be the bearer of an inestimable gift to man. What was it? Brotherly love! I am an old man. In my long life I have seen those on whom this unspeakable gift was bestowed, seek every remedy but the one which is simplest and best. Let Mr. Adams know that if he will inject brotherly love—Christ's remedy—into the business or economic system, he will be successful in administering Mr. Rockefeller's bequest."

"So that is what the old Socialist's life fades into," remarked Endicott after they bade Bristow good evening and were on their way back to the Executive Mansion. "He admits that his theories were all impractical, and is now, at the close of his life, dreaming dreams of brotherly love."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A LEAF FROM A LIFE.

The President was disappointed.

He had hoped that Bristow, out of the fullness of his long life and experience, could shed a ray of light upon this dark problem.

There was a dim suggestion of such a ray in what had been said, but after all, the generalities of the conversation were too misty for his practical mind to appreciate. He wanted a plan. He wanted facts. He wanted details. Was it possible that the hot political campaign of 1952 was fought on such intangible theories as Bristow had advanced that evening? It seemed incredible. The President suspected that extreme old age had weakened Bristow's perceptions. He called for the autobiography of John R. Bristow, which was in the library, but which he had never had time to read.

When it was placed in his hands, he opened it carelessly and read:

"The Democratic republic of commercial America was well described by the historian Macauley as being 'all sail and no rudder.' Fortunate or unfortunate as this may be, it is rendered subject to the strongest influences which the activities may develop. I saw, prior to 1952, the very conditions which Macauley predicted. He said:

" 'The day will come when, in the State of New York, a multitude of people, none of whom have had more than half a breakfast or expects to have more than half a dinner, will choose a legislature. Is it possible to doubt what sort of a legislature will be chosen? On one side is a statesman preaching patience, respect for vested rights, strict observance of public faith. On the other is a demagogue ranting about the tyranny of capitalists and usurers, and asking why anybody should be permitted to drink champagne and to ride in a carriage while thousands of honest folks are in want of necessities. Which of the two candidates is likely to be preferred by a working man who hears his children cry for more bread?' "

"In 1952, not the State of New York alone, but all America furnished the example proposed by the historian. I was the candidate of the Socialist party for President. S.N.Cleveland was the candidate of the vested interests, then mostly controlled by Aldrich Rockefeller. The people were impoverished. Millions could obtain little more than half a breakfast. They were ready to vote for me if I could guarantee them food for their children. I could not do so and they knew it. But Cleveland was supported by the vested interests and the people believed the vested interests could relieve their present distress. Therefore Cleveland became President, partly because the people looked to him for food and partly because the interests were able to count votes which I am sure were never cast.

Therefore the example proved precisely the contrary of what the historian felt certain it would.

"It was a contest between the men who controlled the Socialist political party on the one side, and the Republican party of the Standard Oil Company and all the wealth of America, on the other. The propaganda of the Socialists was maintained by a press which, because only slight capital sustained it, was considered irresponsible. All the great papers and most of the great writers were owned by Standard.

"Why was not the Socialist party successful?

"We called it the party of liberty, of fraternity and of the people.

"We proposed to get control of the government first and then to take the industries away from Rockefeller and give them to the government.

"We proposed that the new government would operate all industries as it managed the post office department.

"How could we get control of the government?

"By voting our candidate into office.

"When we obtained the offices, how would we administer them so as to place the industries at their disposal? How get them away from Standard?

"I now see that we began at the wrong end.

"Government is only a shadow of the economic power.

"Had we possessed control of the economic power we would have had no difficulty in creating and maintaining any form of government we chose.

"But government is incapable of either creating or conducting a business independently. Germany could not do it even within confined limits, were it not for the aid and assistance of the so-called business interests.

"I can now see clearly enough that we sought to seize the shadow and then, through the imaginary force contained in the shadow, seize and operate the industries.

"Suppose the government were suddenly annihilated. The industries would rebuild it almost instantly. But if the industries are destroyed, government can never rebuild them and men nust proceed to do so by the same slow, laborious, systematic method and work which created them in the first instance.

"Whosoever owns the instrumentalities of production and distribution will own and control the government. If the Socialist party had owned the economic instrumentalities, it would not have needed the government except as society needs a watchman or a police officer.

"The defeat of the party which I represented was the last stand humanity made for popular government in America. The success of Rockefeller was complete, and universal Socialism was established in the interest of an autocrat.

"Is there any redemption?

"Yes. The redemption will come through the operation of God's eternal law. It will come in God's appointed time. Feudalism developed despotism ages ago. Despotism in the military system submitted by compulsion to the modification introduced by the commercial system. In England the commercial gained absolute control but did not banish the semblance of feudalism. The feudal government and the commercial were welded. But in America the system became purely commercial. The feudal conditions had no place. Titles were abolished. Hereditary privileges were prohibited.

"John D. Rockefeller, Morgan Rockefeller's great ancestor, was an evolution of the commercial system. No trace of the old barbaric, picturesque feudal idea could be discovered in his make up. He was possible only because America was full of would be Rockefellers. He obtained the prize and when the innumerable likenesses of this great man found he had captured the prize they sought, he was denounced on all sides. He was without doubt the best type of the commercial system as Caesar was the best type of the military. As the commercial was greater and higher than the military, so Rockefeller, the highest exponent of that power, was and is greater than Caesar, the highest exponent of the latter.

"The absolutism of Morgan Rockefeller, America's dictator, will be modified.

"How?

"I do not know.

"Nobody knows except God.

"God's law is expressed in the rule which men call Golden.

"It is brotherly love.

"If somebody can organize brotherly love as Christ taught it and apply it to God's kingdom on earth—then His will will be done—His kingdom will come on earth as it is in heaven.

"I have some times imagined the possibility of

Morgan Rockefeller or some descendant assuming to transfer the system which he controls to the government which he permits to exist.

"If he did so, what would happen?

"But after all, it is not to be expected, and time spent in such speculation is wasted. Whatever new system is to supercede the dictatorship of the Rockefellers, will steal in unawares, as the commercial stole in on the military. Let us hope, in the providence of God that the new system will be the fraternal."

The President closed the book almost impatiently, then burying his face in his hands, sat in silence for a long time.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE CABINET MEETING.

May we enter the cabinet meeting which occurred the day after the reading of the will?

May we listen to the discussion and view the faces of its members unobserved?

The most eminent statesmen of the age are there, each at the head of a department of the political government. There is Blaine, Secretary of State, descendent of James Gillespie Blaine who flourished in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Is it a case of atavism? How strikingly like his great ancestor in manner and appearance—only James G., the ancestor had the bold commanding look of a king, as if there was no power to which he could not attain. The descendant gave the impression that his bold and commanding manner was assumed in the name of some other—and a courtier's gentle smile played lightly on his face.

There is Endicott, Secretary of War, young and handsome, but of somewhat cynical expression.

There are Evans, Secretary of Navy; Thompson, Secretary of Interior; Garfield, Secretary of Commerce; Wanamaker, Postmaster General; Holmes, Attorney General. Other departments are also represented.

But why are they assembled?

What has a political body to do with the will of Morgan Rockefeller or the economic system?

President Adams, not the government, is executor of the will.

But the estate has been devised to the government.

What department shall exercise for the government, the functions of trustee?

Shall each department assume a responsibility? Or shall the President assume all responsibility and leave the several departments to their present work?

Tremendous questions those!

A more important question than all of them, however, presses for solution.

"The industries which have come into the hands of the President, as executor of the will, must be continued in operation." Thus speaks the Attorney General. "To stop the mills, workshops, railroads, ships and stores of this estate would be equal to a decree of death to all humanity. President Adams, as executor of this will, has a greater responsibility than as President of the government. By a single word he can close the industries and crush both the government and society, which shows, plainly enough, that the government is the least important of the President's present responsibilities. Still the constitution of the republic does not permit the government to do business. None of its provisions suggest that its makers contemplated that the federal government should take, hold and operate any enterprise of a purely industrial or commercial nature. This will, therefore, provides for the transferrence of the estate to officials who have no legal authority to employ the functions of their offices in commercial or industrial pursuits. Will any government official dare to assume to perform duties not legally attached to the office? I cannot see how the government can run these vast industries. In order to do so you must change the constitution radically—so radically as to abolish the present system of political administration and create a new form of government altogether."

"How would it do, General," suggested Secretary Blaine, "to sell the estate to the highest bidder?"

Secretary Blaine smiled as he made the suggestion.

"You must not forget, Mr. Secretary, that the Rockefeller estate owns all the nation's wealth and consequently is the only possible purchaser who is able, ready and willing. Where would any proposed purchaser get the money to pay the purchase price? The assessed valuation is over three hundred billion dollars. Again, even if any person had the means to purchase, has not the order demonetizing gold, and making all bills due the estate payable in labor exchange checks, so completely deprived gold of its purchasing power as to make a purchase and sale impossible? In other words —the system has become automatic, and, unless somebody stops the machinery forcibly, it will continue to operate successfully and perpetually and to govern itself by its own rules and regulations."

The great men of the cabinet sit back with serious and thoughtful faces. They have never considered the problem in this light before and they are annoyed that such an avenue of escape is cut off. They feel still more profoundly their overwhelming responsibility. While they realize that a strong government can do anything it wishes, they know that no official or combination will dare to exceed the limits of legal authority. They themselves have no conception of what their duties in the new order will be. However, relief comes so far as one phase is concerned.

His excellency, the President, has been silent, but now speaks:

"I desire to inform the cabinet that, as executor of this will, I made a compromise with the Colorado Provisional Government, as it calls itself, whereby all property has been restored by that government to the estate on condition that I rescind the order demonetizing gold. I have agreed to rescind the order tomorrow."

What boisterous applause! The cabinet is delighted. The members rush forward and congratulate the President. "He is the greatest statesman that ever lived," they declare to one another.

Three plans are proposed for consideration.

First, to sell the entire plant.

Second, to apportion the property among the several states with permission to lease each plant to competent men at a stipulated rental.

Third, to find the heir of the estate, Morgan Rockefeller's niece, have her contest the will and arrange to have it set aside in her favor on the ground that the government had no capacity to accept such a legacy and that the testator was of unsound mind when the will was made.

"I believe," says President Adams, "that the last plan is the best. Mobs cannot manage business enterprises, and now that the government, which is the voice of the mob muffled by the constitution, and this estate are one, the greatest corruption is bound to creep in. Cliques will organize to acquire privileges, and democratic socialism will destroy civilization and restore barbarism quicker than any disintegrating influence I know of."

"What are the prospects," asks Secretary Blaine, "of rescuing the lost heiress, Miss Channing?"

"I have the honor to report," replies Secretary Endicott, accepting the question as directed to him, "that the executor of the will has placed at my disposal a large fund to be employed in that work. I have sent one of our skillful manipulators, Moreland Hughes, to Colombia, in South America, with ample means to inaugurate and carry forward a revolution. He is familiar with Spanish, which he speaks like a native, and has spent much time in Colombia in former years. The people of Colombia are easily corrupted. Revolution is a matter of money. Whoever can distribute the most money among them will win. We expect to capture the outlaw, Jamieson, and bring him to this country for trial. Mr. Alden Lowell has discovered by means of his most remarkable invention that the young lady is in Medellin, but since her arrival there the reflector has not been able to reach behind closed doors and brick walls. The plan is to search Jamieson's house and, if necessary, every house in Antiochia, to find her."

The decree rescinding the order by which gold was demonetized was popular everywhere.

It was a triumph of weakness manifested in political action, over logic, strength and justice. It was a step backwards. The cabinet did just what might be expected of men who were guided merely by a political sense. A government through which blazed the fires of prejudice, superstition and passion, and in which the dogwood of illogical habit grew most luxuriantly, could not be expected to do otherwise. The commercial power of the nation never made such mistakes. It might vary its methods, to increase its profits, but it never changed its system except to improve it.

Colorado having returned to the political and industrial union, the reputation of the President shone with dazzling lustre and his personal influence increased with all classes of people. His power or influence now exceeded that of any president the republic ever had and his popularity was altogether unusual for one who controlled the industrial interests.

But the absorbing question which took precedence of all others remained unsolved.

"What shall the government do with the business system?"

"What shall the business system do with the government?"

It was becoming apparent every day that neither was suited to the other's needs.

The political was entirely unnecessary to the commercial.

The commercial was not in the least degree submissive to or under the control of the political. The masses were contented enough, but murmurs of discontent arose here and there, not very pronounced at first, yet growing louder among the favored and privileged classes, the annuitants and geniuses, as the medalized and distinguished inventors and literary or scientific experts were called.

These disturbed the cabinet, members of Congress, officials and rulers. They made sentiment. Their opinions dropped to the social station below them. Revolutionary influences were beginning to work. Fermentation was in progress.

A special seession of Congress was called.

CHAPTER XXX.

THAT SPECIAL SESSION.

September, 1990, saw Congress in session, and engaged in a parliamentary discussion over the government's unexpected bequest. The President in his message recommended that the representatives of the people make some disposition of it by which the burden would be removed from the President's shoulders. He pointed out, briefly, the legal difficulties which the constitution presented to the realization of Mr. Rockefeller's dream, and suggested the three plans which had been formulated by the cabinet. He reminded Congress that it was not confined to the three plans suggested, but that it would be entitled to the highest credit, if it could and would dispose of this three hundred billion dollar property by some better plan than any of those suggested.

Congress approached the subject gravely and cautiously.

Its members had to deal with constituencies which now felt their importance as they had never felt it before. They did not dare to act in defiance of the will of their electorates. The nation was alive to the possibilities which the bequest suggested, but not to the difficulties confronting their rulers.

The long discussions of that famous session form a compendium of learning and eloquence which never before emanated from a parliamentary body. Every fact or pretended fact, every theory or pretended theory, every dream, or fancy, which literature, science or debate ever developed will be found in the speeches which appear in the congressional record. In 1890 such a discussion would have paralyzed business, destroyed confidence and precipitated an avalanche of misery. In 1990 it had no effect on business, but it did produce a degree of unrest among the people which took on a revolutionary character. The upshot of it all was that the President and cabinet were directed to dispose of the estate, in whole or in part, by sale to the highest bidder, and that all values must be appraised by a commission appointed from each state.

It was estimated that the work of the commission would require at least a year.

If there should be no bidders within sixty days after the valuation had been fixed, then the President was expected to recommend another plan.

This decision was distasteful to the President. His inclination was to veto it, but after consideration he concluded to allow it to become effective without his signature.

He could not see where the problem had been simplified.

It was as complex, as unsolvable, as exasperating as ever. His own burdens as President and executor were so heavy as to be well nigh unbearable. In order to perform his duties he was obliged to delegate the political government to the vice-president and to give more and closer attention to the industrial.

He also developed a theory that the more satisfactory his business operations proceeded, the less important the political government appeared to be. He was convinced that if the industrial system was all right, if it produced abundantly and distributed fairly and justly, the governmental system could not go far astray.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE ARROW SHOOTS HOME.

The winged ship, Arrow, flew out of the harbor of little old Cartegena under a blue sky and through equally blue waters. It was delightful to sit on the shady side of the boat and look back at the walled city, the high hills, the ancient fortress and the gray, deserted monastery. What traditions of a period of the world's history, more romantic than the wildest and fiercest conflict of knight or crusader, these scenes revived Helen, as she sat on the deck and viewed the rapidly receding shores, recalled the stirring events with which fortress and monastery were associated. In her imagination the Great Admiral groped his way doubtfully along these strange shores, and buccaneers ploughed boldly through this boisterous sea to bid defiance to the walls and forts which defended Cartagena, the treasure vault of the Spanish West. Here Drake, undaunted and savage as the age in which he thrived, engaged the ships of Spain and sent many a stout adventurer to his fate beneath the wave.

But the Arrow heeded not the musings nor the interesting associations and with the swiftness of a meteor sped on its way across the Caribbean sea. Helen—rescued and homeward bound—reveled in the balmy breezes of that tropical ocean. She felt as if life were beginning anew with her. Nearly three months before she had been torn away from her home and the work she dearly loved and detained in a land of isolation. Now it was past and seemed like a horrible dream from which she was awakening. As she reclined in the deck chair and thought of all the strange events of her recent life, she was completely lost to what was occurring immediately around her.

"Oh! Helen, I say, Helen," called a feminine voice beside her and Helen, startled from her reverie, looked up and saw Mrs. Locksley in the act of placing a chair on the deck beside her.

"I declare," said Mrs. Locksley, "I never knew you to be so absent-minded."

"Well, I guess, Auntie," declared Helen, smiling happily into Mrs. Locksley's beaming countenance, "I guess you would be a little absent minded if you had gone through as many sudden changes as I have."

"Well, Helen, if you had stayed for three weeks, all sole alone in a place like that Cartegena with its narrow street, its strange food and outlandish people, waiting in terrible suspense to learn the whereabouts of the one who was dearest in the world to you, you might be excused for getting absent-minded."

"I know, Auntie," returned Helen self-reproachfully, "you must have had a terrible time. I wonder if it is worse to be in suspense over the whereabouts of a lost friend than it is to be in suspense because your friends don't know where you are and are worrying about you."

"But you were telling me, Helen, at the hotel, last evening, how Alden Lowell and General Romero found you and I was quite desperate when Mr. Lowell interrupted. Can you finish now?"

"Not much to finish, Auntie. There they were—revolutionists—right in my room and I taken prisoner. Of course I supposed it was another capture just as bad as when I was seized in Watertown, and prepared for the worst. Then there was Colonel Gonzales whom General Romero ordered to take charge of me as his prisoner and when I looked behind the blazing uniform of the revolutionist and saw the face of Mr. Alden Lowell—why, I just fainted and he caught me so I didn't fall. Of course I recovered consciousness just as soon as I could and then it turned out that the government of the United States had sent General Romero, whose real name isn't Romero at all, and who is just a plain American citizen, down to rescue me and Mr. Lowell went down with him. So the revolution was all about me after all."

"Well, that General Jamieson, as they call him in Cartagena, will get his deserts when he gets to the States." Mrs. Locksley was not smiling when she made this threat and the look which came over her face was quite fierce. "The idea, that he should abduct a young lady, and that young lady the richest in the world."

"Oh, Auntie!" exclaimed Helen, "am I really related to Morgan Rockefeller?"

"Well, I guess you are!" Mrs. Locksley spoke very positively. "I guess you are and you are the only blood relation near enough to be his heir. Didn't Mr. Lowell tell you? All the people in the United States know it and more than half, I think, believe you ought to have his whole property instead of the little million a year he left you."

"A little million a year!" Helen laughed quite heartily. *"Little*—why, a million a year is so big that I couldn't spend it. What can one do with a million a year, but worry about it? I am sure I don't want to be his heir and take all the burdens of the country myself. It wouldn't be just to make me do it. Let each bear his own share of the burden of wealth. I am sure it is a burden. I was reading a book only the other day which showed how the children of wealth were ruined by their wealth. Each had to cultivate expensive habits to enable him to distribute what he had to spend and didn't really need. They ate too much and got others to eat too much. They drank too much and got others to do the same. They dressed too much and wasted their time that way. They made poor citizens, poor husbands and wives, poor fathers and mothers, poor sons and daughters, and were corrupt, degenerate and dissipated. They were poor in all things but money. They had everything they ought not to have, and no time to get what they should have. Each should be compelled by law to take his own share of the burden of wealth and not force it with all its distressing results, on one or two persons."

Mrs. Locksley looked at Helen in blank astonishment. But after a pause and without modifying the expression of surprise, she said under her breath:

"Well, I believe that is right."

"Good morning, Miss Channing—good morning, Mrs. Locksley!" said a cheery voice just then, and looking up the ladies saw Mr. Lowell, hat in one hand and a deck chair in the other, awaiting an invitation to be seated. The invitation having been joyously extended and accepted, the conversation turned away from Colombia, whose shores were now but a faint and fading line far to the south, to that land of hope to which they were hastening.

"You will be received in Boston like an empress, Miss Helen," said Alden. "The whole nation is awaiting you and a good many of them would be glad to help you get your uncle's estate."

"And I would not thank them," insisted Helen. "Mr. Lowell, if I am really the niece of Morgan Rockefeller and all this fortune—I do not call it 'good' as you and Auntie do—has come to me, do you not think it wonderful that God should have so ordered, that I, a woman, should be placed at the head of the Reapers of the World? That I, the Lady Harvester, should be an instrument, perhaps, to show men and women a gift so great that all the wealth of this world is not equal to it? That I, the heir of Morgan Rockefeller, should be appointed to illuminate the mission of Jesus, who taught men that brotherly love was the only remedy for their ills and that if they would use it as such, this old earth is capable of supplying all who live with abundance? I long to correct the mistake which Morgan Rockefeller has made—not by taking this burden of wealth myself, but by sharing it fraternally with my brothers and sisters who are joint heirs with me."

XXXII.

THE HEIRESS UNCHANGED.

"Have you not forgotten the Reapers after these terrible experiences?" asked Alden.

"Forgotten them! Why, Mr. Lowell, do you think anything can make me forget the Reapers? Never! I shall return to Watertown and do just as I have done before and if I have any influence, as you seem to think, I shall use it to repeal those laws which President Rockefeller caused to be enacted to suppress fraternal and secret orders. I still believe the Reapers have a great mission to perform. I did not think you would backslide." She looked reproachfully at Alden.

"Well," said he, "I assure you that I have not deserted the Reapers. If you believe in them, I do—but I already feel that I understand how the order may become of wonderful importance now. To tell you the truth, Miss Channing, I am more profoundly interested in the fraternal redemption of the world than ever before. Indeed, you may be sure that I am greatly relieved by your decision to continue your work in so great a field. But if you will allow me to change the subject—What do you think the government will do with General Jamieson?"

"You know better than I do." She looked down at the floor of the deck thoughtfully and sorrowfully.

"I do not want to see him punished and I would like to see him released and sent back to Colombia."

"Well, I should hope not!" exclaimed Mrs. Locksley. "The rogue ought to be hanged."

"But suppose he has changed his views, Auntie," pleaded Helen. "I think," she continued, "he ought to go back to Colombia and, although he is old, he could start the fraternal system there."

"Start the fraternal system in Colombia!" laughed Alden. "Preposterous! It will require the strongest kind of a government to keep Colombia quiet. Fraternalism would find no good soil to grow in there."

"You are wrong, Mr. Lowell. If an association like the Reapers of the World had been organized in America in the time of John D. Rockefeller and had endeavored to acquire the industries just as Rockefeller did, its success, instead of being delayed eighty-two years, would have been accomplished in ten or fifteen years. Let me illustrate." Helen had become very earnest and argumentative. "Suppose there had been twenty thousand members of a fraternal order in Mr. Rockefeller's time. Suppose each had been devoted to his order and paid two dollars a month into a trust fund. That would be forty thousand dollars in one month, eighty thousand in two months, four hundred and eighty thousand in a year, four million eight hundred thousand in ten years. Now, suppose after the ten years of such accumulation the chief of the order directed three members to form a townsite company such as they used to have. The company has a capital stock of half a million. The fraternal order buys the stock and puts that sum in its treasury. The order is now the only stockholder. As such it has a right to elect all the directors. It therefore elects the most practical men among its members who understand real estate."

"Ah!" interrupted Alden, "you don't think they would make a wise selection, do you?"

"Why not? The stockholders of John D.'s time were wise, and a fraternal order would be as ready to select honest men as anybody."

"But the board of directors would not be competent to handle the townsite business, Helen," again interposed Alden.

"In those early days they were. Why would they not? They would elect a first-class manager and make him responsible. The only question would have been—Can a fraternal order be as wise and honest a stockholder as an old line life insurance company? But don't interrupt, please. I want to continue. The manager of the townsite company finds himself in possession of half a million which he is to invest for the townsite company. He finds a tract of land—say two sections—located on a navigable bay. He makes a bargain for it and reports it to the board of directors. They investigate and decide to purchase, paying one hundred and fifty thousand dollars for it. The company proceed to lay out a town and build a store-building or two and a number of houses. The chief of the fraternal order has, in the meantime, appointed three others to organize a saw mill company. The capital of this is another half million. The fraternal order is also the stockholder. It elects the board of directors. These in turn elect a first class manager and pay him a salary. He proceeds to deal with the townsite company and purchase a site for his mill of that company."

"Isn't that foolish!" exclaimed Mrs. Locksley. "Why not have one company do it all?"

"That's just where all those co-operative associations which tried to do business failed!" exclaimed Helen patiently. "Business methods are an evolution. The main thing in business is system. That system is most valuable which inspires the superintendent or manager with the greatest sense of responsibility. The townsite company could keep good records of its transactions and feel proud to show a better record in making profits than the sawmill company. Each would vie with the other. Even Mr. Rockegeller had hundreds of different corporations. He merged them into one, where it was plain an advantage could be gained. But for the convenience of bookkeeping hundreds of corporations were not merged.

"I would have the fraternal order organize a shoe factory under the control of a separate corporation. This factory would also purchase a site from the townsite company. Perhaps the townsite company would find it convenient to make a donation of a site, but as a rule I believe it would be best not to. With a townsite company employing five hundred carpenters, masons, laborers and others in constructing the necessary buildings, such as houses, stores, factories and warehouses, also streets, parks and public buildings, that company alone would make a city of twenty-five hundred. The other eight companies would easily employ five hundred each, making four thousand directly dependent, with their families, on the several businesses of the corporations. That would justify a calculation that all the workers and their families would number twenty two thousand persons. Now the land has been covered with houses. There are valuable buildings. There are public improvements, street cars, water works, gas and electric plants and everything which contributes to the comfort of a city of that size. All the profits belong to the corporations. All the rent goes to the corporations. All the interest goes to the corporations. All the increase in land values goes to the corporations. These pay dividends to the fraternal order. The fraternal order scrutinizes, from the watch tower of its weekly or monthly meetings, all the enterprises, and sees that a proper part of the interest, rent and profits is distributed among its members. When it comes to earning wages the workmen may not be on equal terms, but profits, rent and interest are divided equally among the partners—the members of the order.

"Such a city, if it could be true to its fraternal purpose and would keep to beaten tracks of business methods—changing only when an advantage or profit could be calculated—would prove a greater conquerer than any city in history. But it could well afford to open its doors and allow all to become members whose morals and character justified. Fraternal co-operation would save Colombia as it might have saved America. I believe Mr. Rockefeller never cared for his wealth, but he had some pride in the success of his plans and pleasure in the hope that his children would be equal to their trust. Could he have introduced the fraternal system he would have done so. But the time, perhaps, was not ripe until he had demonstrated the possibilities of combined wealth."

"They thought in the days of John D. Rockefeller that the negro question was the most difficult one of that age," remarked Alden. "How would you have dealt with that in the fraternal system?"

"Brotherly love is the only solution of that problem now and was the only solution then. If men will not accept the fraternal solution they must and will suffer. In an economic sense the negro's muscle is as good as that of his white brother. In the same sense his intellignce is as acceptable as an equal degree of intelligence in any other race. It is only necessary to organize on a fraternal basis and adopt the best methods of economic progression known to man. I have no doubt that if that race would organize in a fraternal union on the plan which I have suggested, they would speedily outstrip the white race in the acquisition of wealth and perhaps of intelligence. Organize Christ's plan and Caesar's portion will dwindle to one man's size."

"But you would not admit the negro to your fraternal society, would you?" asked Mrs. Locksley.

"Why not?" asked Helen. "If the negro is useful he should be treated as he deserves. But if the time is not ripe for fraternal association it may be that the races will form their separate local lodges and have representatives only in the grand lodge. Race prejudice is not possible in the atmosphere of true brotherly love."

"What! would you have the negro and the white man live together—their children marry and all mingle in the same society?" demanded Mrs. Locksley.

"No indeed! I do not propose that. It is not necessary. Human society will still continue to be regulated by the customs and the common sense of ages. We do not propose to change society any more than we propose to change nature. It is only intended to infuse brotherly love into the economic system, and by so doing take from society the danger of faulty distribution of the necessaries and comforts of life. In other words—to dispose of the three evils, rent, interest and profits, so that they will not oppress the white man or the black man or the brown or the yellow man. The negro question will be no question at all if the negro is not a menace, and he will not be a menace if he is required by the force of a just and powerful society to work for himself as well as for the common good. In other words economic equality secured through fraternal union, will be an application of Christ's remedy—brotherly love. You know the Standard Oil Company never asked whether a man was black or white but paid the same dividends on every share."

The ship sped on across the sea and Helen, Alden and Mrs. Locksley spent the hours in conversation or in such diversions as have always been employed by voyagers to vary the monotony of the sea. They did not, however, discuss questions as profound as that which engaged them that morning. General Jamieson was a prisoner aboard the ship which left Cartagena harbor just before the Arrow. Helen, now that she was again with her friends and released from captivity, felt none of the resentment which had filled her heart in captivity, and her defense of General Jamieson, while it astonished both Alden and Mrs. Locksley, almost persuaded them to forgive him also.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE CALL OF THE ESTATE.

Some three months had passed since the Arrow arrived in Boston harbor. President Adams had been, much to his sorrow, prevented by his multitudinous duties as executive and executor from being present on that gala occasion. Secretary Endicott had personally represented him, as chief magistrate, at the reception, which was one of the most brilliant ever seen in America. His Excellency had read the reports in the newspaper press and had heard from Endicott that Helen had completely captured the hearts of all classes.

"It was wonderful!" declared Endicott. "No queen of antiquity, whether Elizabeth, Victoria or Wilhelmina was ever so admired. Helen Channing was close to the hearts of the people."

The President was pleased. Somehow he felt that this occasion was providential. He was at a loss to determine just how to turn it to account. The strain upon him, acting as political and economic head of the nation, had been terrible. He was mentally and physically ill. He could not think. He could find none to help him bear the overwhelming burden. In vain had he consulted the members of his political cabinet. Each, in turn, had declared his inability to serve except within the narrow limits of constitutional authority. The political and economic systems were useless to each other in their present forms. They would not mingle. They would not embrace. They would not aid each other. Sometimes His Excellency felt that he would go insane. Wherever he went the populace rent the air with their plaudits. They pronounced him the greatest man who had ever lived. Personally, it grieved him to occupy so large a place. Knowing how great his problem was and how far from solution, he believed he dwelt on the summit of a slumbering volcano. He slept little and had no appetite. People remarked his shrunken form and said "he is growing old."

"Miss Channing is a beautiful and accomplished young woman," said Endicott. "She has all the majesty of a queen, and I believe the people would be delighted if the estate of Morgan Rockefeller could be restored to her."

"I wish it could be, Endicott." The President looked up with an expression of hope in his eyes. "I wish it could be!" he repeated with a sigh. The Secretary gazed upon his chief with profound sympathy. Endicott, although cynical and apparently cold in his dealings with all men, appreciated the difficulties which beset the path of this man upon whom the world's burdens had truly fallen. He was unable to lighten those burdens by any suggestion which he regarded as practical. But a thought had been running through his mind since his visit to Boston, and he had determined to develop it in the mind of the President.

"I have never seen vast crowds so unanimous in their idolatry of man or woman as those which gathered in and crowded the streets and public places along the line of march when Miss Helen and her party were escorted to the state house where the reception was held. They came from everywhere, from Illinois as well as from all parts of New England. The capacity of Standard's vast hostelries was taxed to the utmost. Did you ever reflect, Mr. President, that humanity will, like individual men, do anything for the woman they love? Did you ever know the people to depose a queen who ruled in her own right? Marie Antoinette was never beloved by the French. But Maria Theresa of Austria, Elizabeth and Victoria of England, Wilhelmina and all others who have reigned alone, were perfectly safe from popular violence. The voice of discontent was silent in a world of chivalric affection. A woman could enslave a world where force would meet its most obstinate resistance."

"But you do not believe I could permit this nation to be enslaved, whether by a beautiful woman or a male genius on horseback!"

"O, No!" The Secretary smiled cynically. "Not that, Mr. President. We do not wish to surrender our liberties, though to tell you truly, I am at a loss to define what our liberties are. Like our ancestors, we still cheer the old flag. We celebrate on the fourth of July. We glorify the deeds of our history and our heroes. But we do what we must to get enough to eat and drink and keep our positions. We could not have less if this beautiful and accomplished woman owned the system."

"Impossible! Impossible!" declared the President. "In spite of all you say the people are really restless and dissatisfied. The old Socialist party has been revived and is gaining strength rapidly. They want to change the constitution in order to have the government fitted for commercial and industrial enterprise. This would require an absolute transformation of the system provided by the forefathers. You know as well as I do—and history teaches plainly—that such radical changes will unsettle conditions and upset society. The result—revolution, anarchy and chaos."

The Secretary eyed the President triumphantly. The latter did not observe it, however, but if one could have seen it the Secretary's expression indicated, not only triumph, but aggression. He raised his clenched fist and brought it down on the table in front of him with such force as to nearly upset it.

"You are right!" he exclaimed. "You must act at once if you would save your country, Mr. President. You are overborne by responsibilities which no man should assume. They will kill you if you do not place them on shoulders where they will rest less heavily. So complicated is the plan to blend the political and economic, that no one will risk his reputation in trying to help you. But if the economic system can be turned over to Rockefeller's heir, a thousand strong minds will spring to her assistance and a chivalric nation will sustain and encourage them."

The President, startled by the energetic words and action of his adviser, sat upright and the old fire sprang to his eyes. He grasped Endicott's hand as it rested where it had descended.

"Right!" he said. "You are right. It must be done. We have gone through the farce of offering this vast estate for sale. We all know that no syndicate could be formed powerful enough to purchase it. The estate alone has the money to buy. The property can not be administered as a government. Everybody who has an idea wants to interfere. The situation is intolerable. Even now it seems probable that we will shortly be compelled to suppress certain radical elements by force. Miss Helen is, however, for some reason averse to coming to St. Louis."

"I know it, Mr. President," interrupted Endicott. "But that is because she is anxious to prevent the punishment of Jamieson who is to be tried in the Federal courts in Boston. Release him, Your Excellency, and she will come to St. Louis at once."

"But I cannot release him. That is not possible until he is convicted. Meantime he is in the hands of the judiciary."

"True, but if you will, he can be tried quickly and acquitted."

"Impossible, illogical and disastrous! If tried, no jury could acquit. If convicted, no president could pardon."

The two sat silent and thoughtful for a time. At last the Secretary, his face lighting up with hope, suggested that if the President extended an invitation to Miss Helen and placed it on the ground that the release of General Jamieson would be discussed, the true situation and its difficulties might be made plain to her.

"I think it would be wise to entrust your message and invitation to Alden Lowell," he continued. "Mr. Lowell has been of great service in more ways than one and her gratitude to him has been publicly manifested."

It was thus arranged, and the arrangement was eminently satisfactory to both of these practical men. They felt that anyway to shift the crushing responsibility of political and economic mesalliance would be justified, if its method was sustained by precedent or had its origin in well tried customs. To them it seemed clear that mankind was habituated to the rule of an economic superior, for they had never been free from one, and for more than eighty years had been at the feet of a remarkable line of economic masters whose natural and legal successor was or ought to be Helen Channing. They believed that the world was ready to submit to her sway and while it was inconceivable that she could be a queen—yet, it was proper that she should exercise, in her proprietary capacity and character, greater power than queen, empress or czarina.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE ESTATE'S ENVOY.

Since his return from Colombia, after witnessing with mingled pleasure and despair, the universal ovation and adoration extended to Helen in Boston, Alden Lowell had been an honored guest of the President at the Castle of Montraven. He had been disappointed in the failure of the mirage reflector to search behind the walls of Medellin and it was his desire to perfect his invention and extend its scope and power. Thus he was occupied constantly in the mirage chamber of the Castle. He did not realize that he had become a hero of international reputation and that his exploit in Colombia was famous the world over. He was quite oblivious of the fact that his scientific fame had placed him in the gallery of earth's greatest benefactors. He was conscious of a great and absorbing love for the lady whose station was, he believed, far above his, and also of a great desire to impress her with a worthiness which he feared he would never possess.

He was, however, delighted to be intrusted with the President's message. For three months he had not seen the face of the adored one. Letters came from her and he wrote her in return, but the lady's were mostly about the Reapers of the World, and he answered very respectfully. To read this correspondence one would never suspect the presence of the tender passion. That very morning she had written:

"Dear Mr. Lowell:

The Reapers are becoming quite numerous. We have over twenty thousand in the United States now. I have a plan and if ever I see you again, I want to talk it over with you. You might think of it in the meantime and perhaps you will be better able to advise me when we meet. My plan is to buy the Rockefeller estate. It is valued at only three hundred billion dollars and, you know, gold is money and gold can be used to buy it.

"I am very weary of all the attention of society. It is nothing to me. I do not believe I am a social being. My early ancestors, the Rockefellers, were not strictly social. Of course John D. Rockefeller had a rather homely way of attending church and treating the members with informal cordiality. But his controlling characteristic was his genius and passion for organizing. I have the same passion. Only there is this difference. He wanted to organize and systematize for the sake of acquiring dollars and power. I wanted to organize for the sake of compelling people to take their own dollars and wield their own power. But John D. Rockefeller, in his day, did just what all the world wanted to do, and I have no doubt what he did then was the best that could be done.

"You must write me, Mr. Lowell. I shall always appreciate your devotion to your friend and your heroic act in coming to Colombia to rescue me. Of course you were in duty bound, as a Reaper of the World, to rescue your Chief, but nobody could do it as well as you could.

I am, Fraternally Yours,

Helen Channing."

Alden read this letter many times. Cold and matter of fact as it seemed, the hand writing was her own, and to him, was full of vivid pictures of youth and beauty, not to say love. He had answered immediately, for Alden was no "laggard in love" or at least would not have been one, if the wall of wealth had not been so grim and forbidding between him and the object of his affection. Habit, education and the world's thought had invested money with a divinity which seemed to stand like a flaming sword at the gateway barring his entrance to happiness.

It was sometime before Alden understood the letter which his beloved one had sent him. After a while he recovered from the delight which her familiar hand writing afforded and read her sentences with some thought as to her meaning. "My plan is to buy the Rockefeller estate." He read it again and again. "Buy the Rockefeller estate! Three hundred billion dollars! Dear me!" he thought—"what a wonderful girl she is! But what magic is she dreaming of now?"

While he was engaged in such thoughts, the summons came from the executive mansion and the lover lost no time on his return to his apartments in Montraven Castle in donning his seven league boots, so to speak, and striding toward Boston.

Six hours later he landed at the great South Station and was soon at the Boston Standard, home of the elite of New England society. The hour was late, but so important a person as the presidential envoy was speedily accommodated with suitable quarters and retired to dream of the sunshine which the next day would bring.

As for Helen, she had left the Watertown Standard and was now living in semi-regal splendor, because she could not help it. The world would have it that way. All New England came to Watertown to meet the heir of the Rockefellers. The little hotel which was Helen's home before recent events had placed her on the pinnacle of fame, was not sufficient to enable her to do the honors of the least of those "occasions" which pressed into her life. Isolation was out of the question. In order to escape the multitude and find time to do her chosen work, she must surround herself with a wall of pomp and ceremony through which only the chosen few could penetrate. This was alien to her nature. She resisted it as being opposed to principle until it became evident that her life would be squandered and wasted if she did not obtain protection. So she submitted to the importunity of both old and new friends and reluctantly abandoned the simple life.

She was, as may well be suspected from what is known of her previous life, the child of her inherited genius for organization. The fraternal idea which was embodied in the organization of the Reapers of the World was her life and conscience, but her spiritual nature dominated it all. She believed that, if the fraternal idea could be introduced into material systems, the world would have time and opportunity to study and become accquainted with the religious thought of men and the spiritual power of God. She had come to believe that Alden Lowell was important to her work, but in her respect for his powers and gratitude which she felt for his services to her, she had thought only of his value to her cause, and not his relation to her personally. She was capable of vast love—so vast that she could make any sacrifice for it, even the sacrifice of life or the lives of those dearest to her. Does such a character make martyrs rather than heroes? Did she love Alden? She had never asked herself that question. She knew that she enjoyed greater peace, more complete rest in his society than in that of any living person.

When therefore, she learned next morning that Alden was in Boston, she was impatient until he appeared at the apartments occupied by her and Mrs. Locksley. How delightful it was to have him back again. How pleasant to put aside all cares and cancel all appointments that she might entertain him. Social engagements were rarely broken by this young lady—engagements involving her fraternal work were never broken. But now society must wait—and the all important and sufficient reason was—the arrival of the President's envoy.

The mission of the President's envoy was one which he regarded as delicate. It was not until late in the afternoon that he ventured to approach it at all. They were speeding along the great highway which extended through Salem, Gloucester and Rockport, recalling, in view of the rocky cliffs and the ocean, the events which recently formed so stirring a part in the history of their lives.

"When will Jamieson's trial take place?" incidentally asked Alden.

Helen turned upon him a look of reproachful surprise.

"Did you not read the papers this morning?" she asked.

"Miss Channing," he said, "do you think I would waste time reading papers in Boston?"

"I did not know you were prejudiced against your native city!" She looked at him playfully, but immediately her expression changed to one of sadness.

"I understand." she continued. "Of course you have had little time to read. But if you had read the papers, you would have seen that General Jamieson died last night in the federal prison at Charlestown."

"Died!" exclaimed Alden in surprise and almost with a note of exultation in his voice. "Died! Can it be possible that the old rebel and professional revolutionist is dead!"

"Mr. Lowell," she said sadly, turning and looking him full in the face, "you are glad that this old man is dead, and you feel that he deserved punishment for his acts toward me and toward Rockefeller's regime. For my part, I have read history and I am sure that General Jamieson was what may be called one of the best types of the 'old school'—the sort of a man, gentleman and leader who was not only admired in the days when John D. Rockefeller was hated, but who was imitated and whose example furnished an inspiration to the youth of that period. Is it not true, as Macauley says in substance, that we change our customs with our fashions and wonder why our ancestors were so wicked? Today the type of Rockefeller is admired and the heroic figures of nineteenth century gentlemen move through the corridors of the twentieth century like so many barbarians. The grandest note of harmony in one song becomes a note of discord if introduced into another."

Alden felt embarrassed. If the nature of man could divest itself of its reverence for artificial things, such as wealth; for delusive things, such as birth and for sentimental things, such as fame, he would probably have made a jest of her philosophy. But he was inclined to take it seriously. It occurred to him, after a while, that the death of Jamieson had removed an obstacle in the way of Helen's visit to St. Louis. He recovered his courage and made bold to explain the object of his mission.

"Do you say that the President wishes to consider my attitude toward poor General Jamieson's trial?" she asked. "Then, perhaps the general's death makes it unnecessary for me to go to St. Louis."

Probably the worst diplomat in the world is a lover who doesn't know whether his affection is reciprocated. Alden felt again that he had blundered. He could only say:

"But you had better go anyway."

"Why?"

"I think the President wants to see you."

"And why?"

"I have no answer except that everybody does."

"Why doesn't he come to Boston if he wants to see me?" Helen was inclined to tease her friend. Then she changed the subject. The auto car in which they rode suddenly shot out upon a portion of the highway which overlooked Massachusetts Bay near Manchester by the Sea. The scene which burst upon their view was one which could be described as neither bewilderingly grand nor majestic, but fascinating, restful and harmonious. The islands which cluster beyond the shore and dot the shining blue with green and black, the myriad boats which flit and fly along and above the dimpled surface of the deep, the rugged cliffs whose summits were decked with many a summer hotel for Standard's happy employes, and the jutting promontories where cities reared the glistening spires of churches—presented a picture which captured and held the fancy spellbound. For a space the road ran in full view of this beautiful scene, and both Alden and Helen gazed upon it silently and with a feeling of deep enjoyment. What a feast for two loving souls.

Helen broke the silence first.

"I will go to St. Louis, Mr. Lowell; I will see the President. I really think he needs me more than I need him."

Alden was startled. In his happiness to be near this delightful being, he had, for the moment, forgotten that he was really there as an envoy. He had forgotten his embarrassment of a few minutes before and had ceased to think. Now he was brought back to earth by the sudden success of his mission. If the skies had opened and let a crown fall into his lap without notice he could not have been more surprised or better pleased.

"When will you go?" he asked.

"Tomorrow," she answered.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE SNARE OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

St. Louis, like Boston, was chivalric and faithful. The newspapers of the city had given the inhabitants, on the morning after Alden announced to the President the acceptance of his invitation, the news that Miss Helen Channing, heir of all the Rockefellers, would arrive on the morning train from the East. The same papers announced that in honor of the event, Mr. Adams, as executor of the Rockefeller will, had declared a holiday and that all factories and shops should be closed without loss of wages.

Although the train was not due until ten in the morning the people began to gather around the depot two hours in advance, and long before it arrived every street, window and roof in the vicinity was filled with eager and crushing crowds. It was with difficulty that way was made for the auto occupied by the President and Mrs. Adams, who came in person to meet their distinguished and all but royal guest. The people were devoted to their great chief magistrate and as his equipage slowly made its way through their midst, they cheered him with evidence of enthusiasm and appreciation. But the people shared with the President a disposition to recognize an economic superior and in addition to this, felt an unrestrained curiosity to see the original of those portraits which had everywhere pictured a face and form of marvelous feminine beauty.

When the train arrived, which it did almost immediately after the President's auto took its place at the platform, a deep silence fell upon the vast crowd. It was the hush of expectancy, such as might precede the rendition of a judgment or the performance of some great and difficult feat. All eyes and ears became intent on the developments around the station. Police officers cleared the platform and made way for His Excellency and the First Lady of the Land(politically) as they proceeded into the station.

It was not long—probably less than five minutes, although to the crowd it seemed longer—before the President and Miss Helen, followed by Mrs. Adams and Alden, appeared at the door. At the same instant the band played and the crowd pushed forward anxious, to catch a glimpse of the guest of honor. A second later and the verdict was rendered. Helen never appeared to better advantage. Her face was spiritual and expressive. Her form, tall, erect and graceful, draped in the simple costume for which she had become noted, gave no evidence of pride. The world gazing at her, at that moment beheld a vision of purity and loveliness and the silence of inspection was in a moment followed by an outburst of approval which moved from the avenue through which she passed in rapid waves, until the whole city seemed to vibrate with joy. Amid these unceasing plaudits the party took their places in the autos and slowly made their way to the Executive Mansion. The President was especially pleased. He conversed with the young lady at his side, smiled and bowed to the beaming multitude and seemed delighted at the reception which his guest was receiving.

"The capital city is pleased," he said, addressing Miss Channing, "to see the descendant of the great house of Rockefeller—but I am better pleased than they."

"Your Excellency is entitled to the thanks of the House of Rockefeller," was Helen's reply.

It was a remarkable day, a memorable occasion. The whole city after that continuous morning ovation went mad with joy and the President, the executor and the municipal corporation provided all manner of sports and festivities to increase the general delight. For days following, the society of the capital, led with semi-royal pomp and glitter of official and diplomatic pageantry, revolved around the dazzled but always self-poised and graceful daughter of the ruling race. The President and his guest were often together, but the occasion which the former sought, the psychological moment which his mind and heart yearned to embrace, seemed far off

Helen felt herself, so to speak, in the snare of circumstances. She realized that though a guest in the house of power, she was being treated more as if she were its royal mistress. Waiting ladies, refined, cultured and elegant attended to her wants and her lightest wish was accepted as a command. The "First Lady of the Land" (politically), the punctilious and ceremonious, but intellectual and sympathetic Mrs. Adams, and her distinguished husband approached with great formality. Do what she would to restore social equality between herself and those around her

—all persisted in acting as if she was of different clay, of purer mould. A system of etiquette, which she had no power to control or check, developed, so that in a few days after she arrived, she felt as if she were chained to a throne. The court of Helen had come into her life as inexplicably, unexpectedly and as unbidden as a dream. At first she protested—but her protests were ignored as completely as if unheard. At last she realized that all were implicated in a conspiracy to honor her beyond what she believed her right and finding how futile her objections and protests were, she accepted the situation and acted the queen as grandly as she looked it. If she expressed a wish to ride, a magnificent automobile with a chaffeur and attendants in gorgeous livery received her at the door and with a lady in waiting who sought to interest and entertain her, she was whirled through the beautiful streets and picturesque parks of St. Louis. Mrs. Adams frequently accompanied her on those delightful spins, but always and everywhere the highest and the lowest treated her either with profound deference or with distant but enthusiastic devotion.

One day the President called and when the attendants had by command of Helen retired, she expressed her mind quite plainly.

"Mr. President," she said, "I am distressed because of the mystery by which I am surrounded. All the people whom you have caused to attend me treat me, not as a guest, but as a mistress, and more like what I suppose to be the treatment accorded a royal person. It is not pleasing to me."

"I hope, Miss Helen," replied the President, standing before her and bowing low, "that you will accustom yourself to the situation in which your lineage and fortune place you. You can not be unmindful of the fact that all America regards you as its most distinguished citizen or that the peace and order of society depend upon you for their preservation."

"But I have never been consulted by you or even taken into your confidence in regard to these matters, Mr. President. You cause me to be placed in a position before the people which I neither anticipated nor hoped for. You must realize that the people will sooner or later strike down the sham idol which you are trying to lift up before them."

"You are much mistaken, Miss Helen." The President still remained standing although Helen had seated herself and invited him to do the same. He looked at her almost triumphantly, his face beaming with satisfaction.

"The whole world is today urging that your rights as Morgan Rockefeller's heir be recognized and that the estate of your deceased relative be restored to the family of which you are the only living representative."

Helen had for several days suspected that the President was responsible for her exaltation. She did not resent it, but being only a mortal after all, began to feel that it was due her. Even the fraternal plan, so dear to her in the years gone by, seemed to have faded a little. Like one borne swiftly and safely on the bosom of a rushing stream, dazzled by a myriad of lights and constantly changing scenes, she had little time for other thoughts than her mysterious and not unpleasant position. The world was beckoning her and bewildering her with its smiles. Only she realized that something was wanting to her happiness. She wondered why she saw no more of Alden Lowell. Sometimes she would half awaken from her dreams and feel guilty and distressed and then she would give all the world of whirling visions, if she could but see Alden and ask and receive his advice. But the pomp and ceremony and royal visions would begin again and conscience had no time to warn, and mind had no time to think. Neither did the heart have time to love. As the President spoke, reminding her of her relation to the great Rockefeller's life, a feeling of pride arose in her soul. It must have found distinct expression in her beautiful face—for the spiritual look which had hitherto distinguished her was less apparent and its heavenly loveliness gave place to a loveliness in which a trace of the hauteur of the material world appeared.

The keen and observant statesman before her had large experience in reading the human mind. He saw and understood the expression of the face which meant so much to him. Wise and skillful in the management of any incident he grew wiser and more skillful as his hopes seemed to promise success.

"Miss Helen," he continued, his voice and manner full of compliment and admiration, "in the great castle of Montraven is a gallery of action pictures in which you should feel interested. All your great ancestors are there. Wonderful films and wonderful scenes are at your disposal. Will you appoint a time to accompany me there and you shall see your great ancestors face to face. You may also see the faces of many others who have helped to build up your illustrious and all-commanding house."

"Mr. President," answered Helen, "I thank you. I have heard of this gallery and am anxious to see it. I will accept you invitation for tomorrow after lunch if it will suit Your Excellency's convenience."

The President withdrew from the presence of the heiress and with a light heart returned to his own apartments, believing that no possible obstacle would prevent his plans from being successful.

XXXVI.

A PLOT.

President Adams, according to his lights, was a patriot above all things else. He loved his country. It may well be doubted if he loved anything else, although he was devoted to the lady who shared with him the honors of the White House in a most exemplary and eminently creditable sense. He was a just man, too, and believed the highest mission which his country could serve, was to administer justice with exactness and improve the instrumentalities by which wealth is produced and intelligence is increased. As has been already made clear, he believed in the Rockefeller estate as the foundation of his country's prosperity and was determined to preserve the integrity of that estate at any cost.

He believed that the Rockefeller system of production and distribution was the glory of the age, and that political government was charged with no higher duty than that of marshaling humanity, for its own good, to husband and foster the economic estate.

Now that a great and overtowering occasion had arisen in his life, the President had not the least scruple as to what sacrifice might be made to save the estate from disintegration and destruction. When Helen arrived in St. Louis his resolution was fixed. She would not escape him. But it never occurred to him that she would wish to escape. Still, with a master hand and mind he lead her into the psychological conditions which he created, that she might become unconsciously habituated to her manifest destiny.

One thing occurred to the President on the very day of her arrival. He must eliminate Lowell from the problem which confronted him. Lowell he regarded as exceedingly deserving and he had been glad to find the young man useful. Indeed, no one rejoiced in Lowell's celebrity and success more than the President. Still he remembered that Lowell was deposed from the New England Furniture Company because of some heretical notion which would have broken a youth of less family distinction and he was suspicious of the young man's influence on that account. He could not be trusted so near the throne as the susceptible heart of a maiden might make it possible for him to arrive. The President therefore determined to send Alden away and Helen had not been in the Capital more than ten hours before the ever-active Chief Executive summoned him to his office.

Great was the consternation of Alden when the President, in a kindly but decisive manner, told him that he had been selected to proceed to China on a mission which was exceedingly important and honorable. Great was his despair when he learned that he was expected to be ready to depart at a very early hour the following morning In those days, as now, the public business took precedence of all things else, and it was a point of honor, not to be ignored by any one who entertained the pride of gentle blood and honorable position, to obey implicitly the command of either the political or the economic chief of the republic.

The President observed the confusion of the youth and suspected the reason. He also knew that Alden would have no thought of resisting.

"Your Excellency will recall that I have just returned from a mission today," Alden had said, his disappointment finding faint expression. "I will, however, be ready. Still, Your Excellency, if I take the early train, I will not be able to say farewell to those to whom that courtesy is due."

"You will prepare at once to go," said the President, pretending not to notice the distress he had caused. "Your instructions are being prepared and will be placed in your hands on the train. You will study them on the way. And now, Alden," he continued, taking the latter's hand, "I will personally say farewell for you to those who deserve that courtesy from you and make your apologies to them."

So Alden was at the train promptly in the morning and received his instructions. He had also written a note to Miss Helen which it is just as well the reader should know now never, got by the secretary, whom the President had provided to help Helen in her correspondence.

The next day President Adams was in consultation with Secretary Endicott.

"Endicott!" said he, "Miss Helen is all you have described her to be. I think I may say that she has no superior in all that constitutes nobility and virtue."

"Your Excelency is pleased?" asked the Secretary indifferently.

"Endicott," exclaimed the President, leaning confidently toward that gentleman and touching his shoulder with his hand, "she should be married, and her great estate requires that her consort be a man of affairs, of wide experience, of education and distinguished family."

"Have you spoken to her on the subject?" asked the Secretary with a smile of amusement.

"Not yet, Endicott," he answered. "I have thought it best to find a suitable person to recommend. When we have found such a person, I will speak to her."

The Secretary looked at his chief again, this time not with indifference, but with a smile which was almost a laugh.

"Endicott," the President grew more confidential now, and his own face seemed to reflect the unpleasant expressiveness of his adviser. "You are unmarried. You have experience in handling affairs. You are of a distinguished family."

The two looked at each other in silence for some seconds, but the smile faded from the face of the younger. He scrutinized the chief searchingly, evidently with an effort to determine whether he was in earnest.

"You say you have not spoken to her on the subject, Mr. President," he said at last. "Has it occurred to you that she may have some wish to be consulted?"

"I have her pretty well in my power. I expect her to act wisely." These words were spoken with some decision.

"Is it your wisdom, Your Excellency, or her wisdom," asked the Secretary, "which you expect will control? I think you will find Miss Helen Channing a pretty worthy descendant of her distinguished ancestors and I have never read of one of that family who was not of a dominating rather than a submisssive factor in his or her own affairs."

Endicott was thinking, however. He certainly did admire Miss Channing. He had never seen a woman whom he had admired so much. But at thirty-eight he had settled into the life of a bachelor and believed he would never marry. Until the President suggested it, the thought of an alliance with Miss Channing had never occurred to him.

The President's suggestion took root in the Secretary's mind. He was in no sense a grasping or avaricious man. He was not ambitious for power other than what his own force could acquire. The prospect of coming into the possession of such a property and being allied with such a woman, pleased his fancy. It did more than that. It interested his mind so much that the picture of a feminine face of striking beauty and fascination was continually before him. The mind, after all, is not far from the heart. Before Alden Lowell had reached his destination on the other side of the world, the cold, cynical Endicott had discovered that he, too, could feel as well as think, and love as well as judge. He continually sought Helen's society when he could find leisure from the duties of his position. In the glare and glitter of the social whirl into which the President had thrown his guest, Helen was pleased with the attention of this courtly and handsome man and received it as a natural and delightful accompaniment of her novel and unsought glory.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE HALL OF HISTORY.

The Hall of History in Montraven Castle was one which in the early part of the twentieth century would have suggested the supernatural. Since the days of John D. Rockefeller, Junior, it has grown in importance until it is the chief repository of those films which contain, in pictured form, the spectacular and oral records of the great historical scenes and events of public life.

The house of Rockefeller is there represented, in life-like activity. The forms and faces of all members of the national family are in the films, in some scenes of national importance.

It was never permissible for any but the members of the immediate family to enter this hall of history, except by special invitation and only the most favored and trusted servants of the age ever received such an invitation during the lives of Aldrich Rockefeller and his successor, the great Morgan. Once a month, in Aldrich's and Morgan's time, the hall was open to all members of the family and their invited guests and such films were represented as were called for, or if none were called for then such as the operators arbitrarily selected.

The day after the President suggested the visit of

Helen to the Hall, the Presidential party, consisting of the President and Mrs. Adams, their illustrious guest and Secretary Endicott, arrived in state at the castle. The Democratic crowds which greeted Helen on her arrival at the capital city were not in evidence now. "They are all industriously employed," the President explained to her. The truth was that every effort was being made by the government to maintain around the heiress an exclusiveness which was not to be removed except on great occasions. The President was becoming a past master in the exploitation of his plans and an air of mystery was producing a proper reverence for the young lady among the people. But several invited guests were in the great reception room of the castle where they awaited anxiously the almost royal party.

As a descendant of the house of Rockefeller, Helen took precedence as they entered the Hall of History, and she was with great ceremony ushered to her place of observation.

"I have taken the liberty," said the President, addressing her after they were seated, "to direct the operator to present the famous film in which Orlando, the great actor, simulating John D. Rockefeller, the founder of your branch of the family, delivers his famous speech against competition."

"I thank you, Mr. President," replied Helen, looking around with genuine interest. "I believe I am more deeply interested in the character and career of the founder of our fortune, than in all his successors."

Helen used the phrase "our fortune" with a note of pride which the President noticed and at which he smiled with evident pleasure.

The operators had been prepared for some time and were in readiness to proceed when the Presidential party gave the signal.

The scene was realistic in the extreme. The subject was "The Inquisition" and Mr Rockefeller sat in the so called witness chair in a celebrated case which was tried in New York City, in the year 1908. The operator explained by way of preface that the incident presented had become one of the most famous in history.

"Little did the people of that day and age," said he, "suspect the importance of the great words delivered by Mr. John D. Rockefeller when subjected to the baiting of that inquisition. It is probable that he did not use the language put into his mouth by the exhibitor, but it is certain that the thought was expressed on that occasion with startling effect. Not until years after was their full force recognized. It is to be regretted that Mr. Rockefeller failed to have these scenes preserved in original films, but Orlando's splendid reproductions will aid us to understand the situation."

The scene presented an old man—apparently approaching seventy—seated on an elevated chair and facing a group of men whose prejudices glared fiercely from their faces. Their questions were thundered at the man of giant achievement with a view to eliciting the information that his action in seeking to destroy competition was little short of treason. It was a perfect representation. The strong, determined and yet kindly and thoughtful countenance of the "founder" was misconstrued by the men who sought to antagonize him. The changing color of the disputants, their attitudes and expressions were those of a real scene.

"Is it not true, Mr Rockefeller," asked the keen and persistent Kellogg, "that the Standard Oil Company has always endeavored to eliminate and suppress competition in the field of oil production and distribution?"

Evidently, the crude and semi-civilized court and spectators regarded the question as a crucial one. Evidently, they expected the witness to evade, and considered that not to evade would be an effrontery which would subject him to the contempt of mankind. All eyes were riveted upon him and his answer was awaited in dramatic silence.

"The Standard Oil Company is a corporation in the nature of a trust," declared Mr. Rockefeller, slowly and without defiance or dramatic affectation. "You fail to appreciate the evolutionary value of this modern economic invention and seem to think that the greatest and most admirable feature of the economic system is competition. I say to you—and coming ages will understand me if you do not—that both war and competition are wasteful and disastrous to humanity. I say to you that war and competition are equally selfish, equally injurious, equally terrible. Death is the reward of both for such 'is the wages of sin.' Every business which preys on another business is not only assaulting it, but is destroying those engaged in it. War is a brutal hell. Competition in the business world is a refined but a thousand times more cruel hell than war. You seek to keep competition alive and persecute me because I oppose it. I say to you that the age of the non-competitive trust has just begun, and that in the years to come, this instrumentality of the economic system will move successfully hand in hand with international arbitration to establish among men the peace of God, and the justice of fair distribution of God's bounties."

"Splendid! Splendid!" exclaimed Helen. "John D. Rockefeller was a hero, indeed. How calmly he accepted the situation and how nobly and truthfully he expressed his views. I have seen the competitive world in Colombia. It is a world of confusion, disaster, selfishness and death."

"It is surprising to us in this age that anybody should seek to justify either competition or war," remarked Secretary Endicott, in recognition of Helen's comments. "The Inquisitor in those days was a hero—but his day of popularity was short. Such a constant disturber of the prevailing current of business as the Inquisitor could not be tolerated and the trusts assumed undisputed sway."

"But was not my ancestor assailed by another enemy?" asked Helen. "I think I recall a plan devised by a Boston man to defeat the system of the Standard Oil Company."

"True," replied the President. "That was Lawson's remarkable effort to organize the speculators in a great movement to bear and buy up the stocks of all corporations controlled in Wall Street. Lawson was a very resourceful and capable man. The plan failed because it did not introduce a principle of justice, but merely proposed that Lawson and his successors should be substituted for Mr. Rockefeller and his successors. The people could see no advantage in the substitution and would not waste time or interrupt the progress of development by aiding in so fruitless a revolution."

The films which followed were varied and interesting. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., interested Helen much. He was a man whose life was not affected by the suspicions which were attached to the actions of his great father. The film presented showed him in the act of delivering his famous speech wherein he illustrated the necessity of making many sacrifices for the accomplishment of the greatest good by instancing the American Beauty rose whose singular beauty was obtained by leaving it on the bush alone to bud and blossom at the expense of its companion buds. At the time when this speech was delivered it was widely and unfavorably commented on by an unappreciative and prejudiced public.

Aldrich Rockefelller appeared to be the most dramatic figure presented by the films. He was a man of splendid attainments and rather inclined to display. In his administration of the Standard the contest between the political and economic powers became acute. But in truth there was never a doubt as to the result. It was not a question in his time, indeed, it never had been a question in the history of the republic, what the majority wanted, but what the majority was willing to tolerate. Aldrich found means to have majorities counted in favor of business stability and the business world had neither money nor inclination to disturb the count.

When the party left the Hall of History that afternoon, Helen felt that these remarkable people, men and women of the Rockefeller family, belonged to her. Yet while she admired the great Morgan most of all, a slight resentment arose in her heart, because he had ignored her during his life, and had not considered her worthy to be his successor in the control of the estate. But the resentment was not pronounced and she did not clearly define a wish to assume the burdens of wealth. It was plain, however, that she was growing into her station and President Adams announced to Secretary Endicott that evening that the conditions were ripe for the institution of legal proceedings for the transfer of the estate to Miss Channing and the annulment of the devise to the government, on the ground of the government's constitutional incapacity to take such a devise or operate such a business.

XXXVIII.

THE TEMPTATION.

Helen retired to rest that night, after her return from the Hall of History, feeling that she owed a duty to her ancestors.

Precisely what that duty was, she did not try to determine.

Neither did it occur to her that during all her life she had been a stranger to the fact of relationship and that both that and the supposed duty were unwelcome to her until now.

All the world conceded that the Rockefeller family had a right to be proud. Such was the world's habit of thought, and what is in the world's thought none but God—or one close to the strength and knowledge of God—can be expected to resist.

The President had gone a little more into detail with Helen in regard to his plans, that afternoon.

"The government," he said "can not take this legacy of Morgan Rockefeller without a radical amendment of the federal constitution. There is nothing left for me to do but sell, and that is impossible as none can buy. If the government retains it as trustee, it must operate the industries and the best legal opinion is that the will may now be set aside and the property turned over to you as the only heir of Morgan Rockefeller. It will require a court proceeding. I will have the necessary papers prepared for you to sign and present them for your signature. Will it be your pleasure to receive me and a deputation of attorneys for the purpose, tomorrow?"

Helen had assented.

"So then," she thought, "the marvels continue to develop. I am to be the owner of all North America and its people. Well—I shall do great good with this wealth."

It was certainly pride which was being enthroned in a heart which had never before felt superiority in a worldly sense.

And what was this pride?

That she should receive the credit for being charitable and relieving suffering everywhere!

That men and women would bless her for her goodness!

That her name would be the synonym of every virtue!

That history would place her among her ancestors and since she now succeeded them when all their work of amassing and assembling wealth and power was completed, she would enjoy where they suffered, and avoid the contamination whose stains were only removed by glorified success.

Helen felt exalted.

Yet she dimly recognized that her enjoyment of this power which had come to her was different and far less satisfying than the enjoyment which she remembered as springing from unselfish action where good was done without ostentation, not in her own name, but in the name of God to whom belonged all glory.

It was sometime before she could compose her agitation sufficiently to sleep.

What wonder!

Was the world being tossed like a ball into her keeping?

When at last she did sleep, her mind winged its way from the consciousness of material delusions to that realm which men call unreal—the realm of dreams.

She dreamed that she was taken up into a high mountain and a crown, blazing with the richest jewels in all the world, came and rested upon her head; that royal robes flowed in stately folds down from her shoulders, and a great company of distinguished looking people with dazzling and brilliant costumes paid homage to her. She looked up and beheld a throne and ere she could utter a word, she felt herself taken by gentle forces and placed upon that throne and a sceptre slipped into her hand. Then a voice seemed to come from below—from the kneeling world—from the slopes of the mountain on whose summit she sat—from the valleys beyond—from the great plains which stretched toward the setting sun—from the rivers and lakes and from the ocean into which the sun was sinking, and said:

"Helen, daughter of a masterful and unconquered race, henceforth be Empress of the West. Rule—and let your children rule after you—for the world has given all power and all government into your hands. Wealth and all its instrumentalities are yours. History and all its glory are yours. You, Empress of the West, more powerful than Semiramis; than Cleopatra, than Elizabeth, than Catharine, than Maria Theresa or Victoria; more potent than Sesostris, Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, Constantine or Napoleon—rule! The world is yours."

Then the skies seemed to open and wonderful figures moved toward her out of the golden clouds which rolled in splendor around the setting sun. She had a feeling that they had come to her from the past—the past so remote, so distant that even Fancy faints with exhaustion in an effort to reestablish it. Strange costumes they wore—strange but always brilliant. From ages forgotten they came—bringing the fruits of those ages—and while the company prostrated themselves—one who appeared to be their king, knelt and said:

"Great Empress, behold! The age in which we lived is forgotten. No trace of its existence is apparent to man's mortal sense. Even our country and all its cities, our capital and all its marvels of architecture, our schools and all their learning, lie beneath the shifting sands at the bottom of yonder ocean. But behold! We have contributed to the glory of that empire which is now yours. Our very name is lost to history even as will be the name of that age and clime which acknowledge your dominion. But we, from the forgotten past, do homage to the present and to you, its Imperial Mistress."

Then the figures faded like phantoms and the golden clouds around the setting sun rolled apart once more and, as from the gateway of a fortress, came a procession of mighty armies with banners. Strange characters were upon those banners, but in her dreamland empire, the knowledge of them was made clear to Helen.

And on the first banner was the name Babylon; and the "King of Kings" who lead the first army commanded the gorgeously caparisoned elephant upon which he rode to kneel, and it knelt before the throne upon which Helen sat. Then the King dismounting, knelt also and said:

"Mighty Empress—ruler of all wealth in whose hands is the fate of millions—behold! our empire and our great city of Babylon is also in ruins. We offer you nothing material. But, behold! we also have given the world all that one generation ever gave to another—our best thought. Accept our gift, mighty Empress, Daughter of Wealth and Power."

Then knelt the kings of Nineveh, and Syria and Persia, and China and the Princes of India, one after the other and offering their separate tributes, passed like the first. And Alexander the Great, leading the Grecian hosts, fell on his knees, with all those heroes and poets, philosophers and teachers, whom Greece had nurtured in her youth and prime, and cried out:

"Do not disdain us, O mighty Empress, for though the ruins, even, of our beautiful cities are nearly effaced, yet do we contribute to your greatness, not material wealth, but the strength of mind, the models and graces of art, and the splendor of truth."

Then suddenly the world and the sun and the heavens grew dark, but immediately became light again with a brightness more dazzling and bewildering than ever. And Imperial Caesar, and the legions of Rome, that Eternal City, and golden chariots and a vast concourse of people swept swiftly to their place before the throne and knelt down, and paid their homage to her and passed on. When Constantine the Great, on whose banner was the symbol of the cross and the words "In hoc signo vinces" knelt, Helen, on her dreamland throne could not forbear to ask: "Did you think then, that Christ charged you to conquer by that sign, but with the sword?" And Constantine answered: "Alas! we did our best to understand, but the truth was lost in the tumult and confusion of our material age. My sword belongs to that age, but the cross I lay at the foot of your throne. I have rescued it for you. May you comprehend its meaning where I failed."

Then as the sun sank into the distant sea and the world grew dark, a vast overshadowing cloud arose whose outlines against the fading light resembled the silhouetted form of the great Napoleon, as he is pictured on the shores of St. Helena. But the night fell and the shadow passed into undistinguishable darkness—and a weird and mysterious whisper was borne to her by the sighing night wind, saying:

"Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne and myself founded empires. But upon what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon force. Jesus Christ alone founded his empire upon love, and at this moment millions of men would die for him. I die before my time and my body will be given back to the earth, to become food for worms. Such is the fate of him who has been called the Great Napoleon. What an abyss between my deep misery and the eternal Kingdom of Christ, which is proclaimed, loved and adored and which is extending over the whole earth."

In her dream Helen sat alone and a feeling of desolation seized her heart. Why was she there? Where now was all that brilliant assemblage? What had become of that wonderful pageantry? What, after all, did this material splendor and wealth amount to? So complete was the change, and so great the reaction, that the desolation of her position became one almost of terror.

Now utter darkness enveloped the world. The sun was gone, the moon and the stars had disappeared, the world and its people were blotted out. She was conscious of being on the verge of a precipice over which she might fall if she made the slightest move. Nevertheless, she rose from the throne and it also vanished. She was left standing alone among rugged and barren peaks whose jagged forms leaned darkly over her like threatening shadows.

Then a voice came to her through the blackness. She was startled. But the voice was so strong—yet so gentle—so confident yet so full of compassion—that she felt in a measure reassured.

"Do not move," the voice said. "I will be with you soon. I know these cliffs and rugged places better than any one who ever lived, and I will guide you. Rely only on me."

Somehow the voice sounded familiar. Yet it was sweeter and more fascinating than any voice she ever heard before. She looked in the direction whence it came, but saw no human form—only the black shadows which stood out from the darkness of her surroundings. While she looked, a flash of lightning whipped across the sky and seemed to wind itself repeatedly and in quick succession round and round the mountain peak. A peal of thunder split the air and a great ledge went tumbling with deafening roar over the precipice below.

"Why," her heart cried out in anguish, "why was

I shown all these wonders, only to be thrown into the wretchedness and agony of ruin!"

She did not speak aloud, but the voice seemed to answer as if her question had been heard.

"I am coming. I will save you. Have courage. Yours is but the common lot of those who reach these barren earthly summits."

It seemed almost an age to the dreamer, as she balanced herself there just beneath the clouds and above the dark earth, before she heard that voice again and felt a strong hand rest upon her shoulder.

"Place your arm in mine," the voice said. "Lean heavily on me."

Helen did as she was bidden and then, suddenly, a great light seemed to shine from the heavens above, and the voice said:

"I, too, was tempted once, Helen, even as you are tempted now. I, too, was shown all the power and beauty which this world contains even as it has been exhibited to you. I had the choice between the tinsel splendor of material and transitory power and the lasting glory of that power which exists only in truth and love. Had I chosen to rule as an earthly king, I could have been like this multitude of shining shadows, which have thus anxiously sought your recognition—as the heir of the material ages. But at last, the vision which was shown me from this great height faded, as all such visions must and in my soul only the truth of God was left. I spurned the gift of the material kingdom and accepted the spiritual kingdom instead. For this they destroyed my body. For this, they sought to efface my very name, or blacken it past recognition."

The voice paused. The surroundings had become very bright now. Helen had not been conscious of moving from the position which she occupied when she first felt the touch of the rescuing hand, but now she saw that the mountain on which she had just been standing seemed far in the distance.

"Oh!" she cried out, "who are you?" And she could not resist the impulse to throw herself at his feet. A feeling of shame filled her heart and she hid her face in her hands, kneeling there and not venturing to look up. But the voice spoke to her again with accents of deep compassion and sympathy.

"Arise, Helen, and be not ashamed," it said. "The splendor of these material kingdoms which have been shown unto you and whose achievements, such as they are, have been laid at your feet, fades and vanishes. Only the spiritual kingdom, the kingdom of love, Christ's kingdom, does not fade. While the names of material leaders are legion, the name of Him who rejected all material, earthly and selfish honor, stands alone. The temptation of Christ was real, Helen, as yours is now. It was possible for him to make the choice which evidences mere human weakness, instead of that which proclaims the omnipotence of God. I bid you rise above this temptation, even as I rose above mine. Forget this glory. Forget this throne, this wealth and its trivial honor. Pursue that great mission which you first conceived, and establish that brotherly love among men, which alone will render this material life worthy."

And Helen looked up, and behold! it was the face of the Christ, and it did not fade but seemed to fill all the world with the consecration and the surpassing majesty and beauty of its smile.

Then she awoke, and it was morning.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE MESSAGE.

The impressions of that night of dreams were exceedingly vivid in the mind of Helen when, after an early breakfast, she waived aside the offices of her attendants and insisted on going into the White House park alone for a quiet stroll. As she passed through one of the rooms belonging to her suite, she noticed her secretary at work assorting, reading and answering her correspondence. A desire to hear from some one who was nearer and dearer than all these mere social beings around her suddenly impelled her to step over to the secretary's desk and look for some letters in which she might be interested. As she did so, she saw one lying on the heap which filled the secretary's basket, and her eye caught the familiar hand writing of Alden. Eagerly she reached out her hand to take it, when Miss Lee, the secretary, quickly covered it with her hand, exclaiming:

"You mustn't take that."

No sooner had she acted and spoken thus than a look of horror came over the secretary's face, as she gazed into Helen's.

"Why may I not take it?" demanded Helen indignantly. "Is it not mine?"

The secretary withdrew her hand as quickly as she had extended it and turned pale.

"Oh! I beg your pardon, Miss Channing!" she exclaimed, hesitatingly "I did not think. I was told—certainly it is yours."

Helen was so anxious to read the letter, and one from Mrs. Locksley, postmarked "Boston," which she also found with the rest, that she did not note what the secretary was saying, but readily accepted the excuse and granted the pardon asked for. There was a vague suspicion in her mind, however, that the secretary acted strangely.

Alden's letter was dated Shanghai, China, and was postmarked three weeks earlier. Evidently it had been long delayed. It was the first Helen knew that he had been sent abroad. His absence and his failure to write or call on her had disturbed Helen a little, but the social whirl and her lack of familiar acquaintance with anybody whom Alden knew intimately, had made it practically impossible to learn about him. She had asked, but no one seemed to know, although the President had once intimated that he had gone on a secret mission. She had wondered why she heard nothing from him, but waited without serious misgivings, yet with some irritation and impatience. Since morning, she had been thinking of Alden a good deal and so now she made haste to be seated in a secluded place in the park where she could read it without interruption.

"Dear Miss Channing," the letter began, "you can not realize how hopeless an American feels in the midst of this dense population. I believe I would rather live in the wilderness of Colombia, among unsophisticated and careless semi-savages, than surrounded always by these mild, submissive automata of an over-wrought competitive and commercial civilization, such as China presents. America under the Rockefellers is a paradise of justice and comfort by contrast.

"Everywhere I go, dear Helen, especially in the crowded and strangely magnificent cities, I see wealth and poverty deriding and denouncing each other. Yet this is not done as I imagine it was done in John D. Rockefeller's time. It must be that the curse of competition is more intense here today than it was in America then. Here the struggle for existence is painfully exhibited in the wan, haunted faces of the humiliated masses as they cower beneath the triumphant insolence of the few victorious.

"I love America. If only that sentiment of brotherly love, systematized as commerce requires, and organized as the Reapers propose, could be substituted as you have fondly anticipated, for the purely commercial autocracy of your great ancestors, then my country would usher in that 'peace on earth and good will to men' of which the Redeemer spoke. Circumstances have placed you, dear Helen, in a position most favorable to your plan.

"I am now writing you in one of China's celebrated tea gardens. It is a dream of old China arranged to be seductive to the fancy of the dreamer or the wandering wayfarer. Before me spreads an artificial landscape presenting the world in miniature. Below the garden slope, I can see the torrential Yalu winding through its fertile and beautiful valley. In some ways it reminds me of our own Mississippi near Montraven

Castle, but nothing comparable to that marvel of architecture or of the capital city of the Rockefellers is suggested.

"Helen, I have propounded to myself this great question: Will the time come when your idea of organized brotherly love will rule America? Will it spread thence to the rest of the world? You are the descendant of the Rockefellers. Has the pride of that splendid ancestry assumed a place in your heart? When I went to Boston to carry the President's invitation I felt the influence of old habits of thought. I looked upon you as in some degree beyond me. I feared it would be presumptuous for me to approach you as an equal. You did not appear to entertain any suspicion that such a superiority existed. I have struggled with my old and new self; the old self which accepted human delusions and superstitions as truths, and the new self which you have invested with a liberty which cannot be limited by falsehood, and I find that now I am able to believe in and realize our social equality.

"Dear Helen, I shall hesitate no longer. While I see that your mission is a great one, to redeem mankind through love, I also am consecrated through you to the same unselfish cause. I think always of man's redemption from the thralldom of his own errors and I think always of you, the bright particular star, from whose loving heart and unselfish thought sprang the fraternal suggestion which a powerful order has made its fundamental law.

"I feel within me, Helen, a strength which is not altogether due to the energy of youth or yet to mind. I believe that I can do the work of a giant in that universal cause of humanity of which you are the idol and the ideal. But, dearest, without you I am nothing. Let me say it now—all that I am or hope to be are the outgrowth of my deep, constant and deathless love for you. I am guided by it as if it were a light by day and a pillar of fire by night leading me to splendid effort or, if need be, to unlimited sacrifice. My life is tormented by doubts as to whether this passion which is consuming me can be understood or my love can be reciprocated. Sometimes I think that I can recall, in that sweetness of our familiar association, evidences that you could love me if it were possible for you to deviate from your high and pure purpose, and select a human being for your especial affection. Your life is one of love—love of truth—love of justice—love of humanity. Mine can be thus, too, if it may also live within your influence and feel that, while we live for all mankind, we live for each other by God's special dispensation.

"Dearest Helen, I have spoken. Your answer is my life or my undoing. Should my declaration be approved and my love reciprocated by you, neither the oceans nor the mountains nor the power of wealth nor the pride of position, can keep us apart.

"I shall await a letter, dearest, in anticipation of that happiness which I have faith will be mine. Yet in spite of that anticipation and all the delightful visions which hope so kindly presents to the imagination of one who loves, I shall be impatient and at times full of doubt and fear.

With undying love,
Alden Lowell."

As Helen read this letter her face flushed and her hand trembled. Agitation, confusion and distress filled her mind. To do her justice, she had rarely thought of marriage and she had felt herself devoted to the cause which she had selected as a life work. She regarded Alden as the most familiar and acceptable friend among men and if her feelings toward him were other than those of a friend and a sister, she had not defined them. He had all the qualities which would appeal to a young girl. But Helen was not accustomed to thinking of herself as a young girl. She had, for nearly seven years of her twenty-four, taken a leading part in every sphere in which she had moved, and the last three weeks had been an acceptance of almost supreme power. She was agitated now, because it seemed that she was called upon to decide a question which she would rather postpone. She was confused because she could not quite understand her duty, and she was distressed because she reflected that poor Alden had waited patiently but in vain for her answer and still must wait. The contents of Alden's letter were entirely unexpected, but as she thought it over, now, she reflected that it was not, after all, surprising that he would feel justified in writing it.

"Strange!" said Helen to herself, as she began to read the letter again, "strange that I have not received this letter before."

Then she felt her face flush once more as she recalled with shame, the pride which had nearly conquered her during the recent past.

"Good morning, Miss Channing!" said a voice, and looking up from her letter, Helen saw the handsome form and face of Secretary Endicott, who stood, hat in hand, bowing with courtly politeness. She was pleased. Secretary Endicott was a man who could not be excelled in giving pleasure in a social way, if he chose to make the effort. Helen enjoyed his society and entertained a very high opinion of his abilities as well as his personal qualities.

"Is it not unusual for you to walk alone in the park?" he asked.

"It is unusual, Mr. Endicott," she replied, "but I was weary of the attention which everybody seems determined to pay me and came out here to get a chance to think."

"Oh! perhaps I am intruding," politely ventured the Secretary, stepping back as if to withdraw.

"No! No!" exclaimed Helen, rising. "I am really glad you have come. I want to ask you some questions relating to certain thoughts of mine. I feel sure you can answer them for I am told you know almost everything."

"I know very little, Miss Helen," returned the Secretary, "and I sometimes wish I knew even less, if that were really possible. Don't you frequently feel that it is very unsatisfactory to think at all? I remember an old song which began, 'O, to be nothing.' In those days when I heard the song sung, I thought it absurd. Now it seems to have a certain truth involved in it." The old cynical look came back to the Secretary's face. But feeling the reproachful eyes of the beautiful and sincere woman at his side upon him he dispelled the unpleasant expression and looking down at her, smiled in his genially enchanting way. "Well, I shouldn't say that, when I have the pleasure of being in your society, Miss Helen, but I sometimes remember a saying an old college friend of mine used to repeat. 'There isn't anything, and if there is, it doesn't amount to anything.' I wish I could take a more cheerful view of the world and what we call creation. I believe I could do so, too, if I had the proper companionship in life."

Helen felt a little frightened. She had received one surprise that morning and was rather nervous. The slightest suspicion came over her mind that this handsome and delightful man was suggesting a defect in his life which it had been brought home to her existed in the life of Alden also. But she resolved to change the subject as soon as convenient.

"That is dissolving all things into nothingness, surely," she remarked, with a little laugh. "But I am sure that it is very pleasant to think if one thinks rightly. I believe that love is the mainspring of all thought which is worth having. If one thinks for his country he will enjoy it, if he is a patriot and loves it. There is no pleasure in this life except in thinking and working for what one loves. Your friend's saying should be changed to express this thought: 'There isn't anything but love, and if there was it would not be worth anything.' "

Endicott understood that Helen was thinking of a universal love and not the sentiment which mortals deal in.

They strolled along leisurely, side by side and the people who passed thought they looked very handsome together. Gossip, too, recognized them with delight and ran with flying feet and flippant phrase to scatter falsehood far and wide.

CHAPTER XL.

HELEN'S QUESTION.

"I am told, Mr. Endicott," said Helen, as they strolled along the embowered avenues, "that you have been especially trained in the diplomatic service and have spent much time in China. I am curious to know more of that country, for it is now the greatest commercial power among those which still adhere to the competitive system. My studies have been limited to Europe, Africa and America and, I have recently, as you know, learned something of South America."

"Yes," answered the Secretary, "I have spent some years in the Dragon's land. It is, indeed, a wonderful country, but I cannot see why any one should care to live there. America is the crowning civilization and our abandonment of the competitive policy has placed us as far in advance of new and awakened China as we were in 1900 in advance of old China. If you will suggest to me what feature interests you most, I will count myself fortunate to be able to give you any information in my power. It would be impossible to give you the history of China in one conversation."

"Thank you, Mr. Endicott," said Helen. "I hope I am not asking too much, if I request you to give me a brief statement of the one or two most important facts in the history of China which bear directly on the development of America."

"I will gladly do that," began Endicott.

"China has been, next to America, the seat of the greatest social revolution in history.

"The Celestial Empire contains over six hundred million people, more than ninety percent of whom are laborers and all of whom, until the latter part of the life of America's fourth Rockefeller, lived simple and spiritless lives.

"Until the time of the fourth Rockefeller, China's exhaustless veins of gold, silver, iron, copper and other minerals, rich beyond the dreams of avarice, remained untouched.

"China's labor, so cheap as to stagger the standards of Europe and America, invited the world to put it to work.

"Capital, lured by these unparalleled temptations and caring nothing for those sentimental ideals which poets and dreamers have presented to a Christianized world, began to pour into China, not with thought of helping and elevating mankind, but for sordid gain, for usury, profit and toll.

"The giant awoke, not into a military age, but into an age of commerce and industry.

"His morning hour had struck.

"He sprang into action with the courage of fatalism and with tireless strength.

"He wrought incessantly with dexterous and restless hands and feet.

"He seemed never to sleep again.

"The whole world marveled.

"The mines opened their treasure vaults to wealth unlimited.

"Factories arose and mingled magical music with the ancient song of every waterfall and rushing tide.

"Railroads stretched their shining steel hundreds of thousands of miles from the heart of China to every mart of trade and center of hope in that vast and mighty realm.

"Measured by the European and American standard, this wonderful industrial structure, more nearly complete in two decades than Europe had become in four thousand years, cost a trifle.

"Cheap labor did it all.

"Steel rails, fabrics, furniture, machinery, jewelry and every description of manufactured articles were produced so cheaply that Europe could not compete and the sceptre of commercial empire, so far as it related to Eurasia, passed to Pekin.

"The Yellow Peril, once feared as an armed menace, developed into an industrial invasion. Germany in some measure saved itself by a high protective tariff and, by enacting laws to suppress combinations of capital, maintained a form of democracy. But England, true to her free trade traditions and slow to change, was nearly ruined and all she used was imported from China or America.

"It is a splendid commentary on the Standard methods of conservation and value of economic concentration, that America, under all the Rockefellers since the fourth, could pay the highest scale of wages, support its laborers in greater comfort than any other nation and still compete with China.

"The Rockefellers were the patrons of education for every man, woman and child in their service. This meant intelligent service which in turn meant skill, efficiency, merit and cheapness.

"In competing with China, since only the Rockefellers were producers or distributors in America, and since they were the only exporters and importers, Chinese goods could not enter America or find purchases there, if the Rockefellers refused to buy.

"While America was politically and theoretically a free trade country, in a practical sense the decision of Standard determined what Chinese goods should come in, if any, and the wisdom of the Rockefellers saved America from being humiliated by commercial China."

"Would not a high protective tariff have saved Democratic America from such humiliation?" interrupted Helen.

"That system of exclusion of Chinese goods might have been effectual to some extent," replied the Secretary, "if the Rockefeller system had not been in force. You remember that in Morgan Rockefeller's time that great man proposed that, as the industries were now operated by Standard and as Standard paid all the tariff dues, which did not meet the expenses of government, those expenses would be in the future paid out of the Merger's treasury as an internal tax. This required a change in the federal constitution and that having been effected the nation became absolutely and in fact a free trade country.

"Does this answer your question?" asked the Secretary, in conclusion, looking down into the face which was turned toward him with every expression of admiration.

"You have answered it, Mr. Endicott," she exclaimed. "You have answered with the genius of condensation and expression for which you are famous. But I would like to ask one other question. Will you tell me what important business Mr. Adam's government is now transacting with China?"

The faintest feeling of jealousy pricked its way into Endicott's heart.

"So that," he thought, "is the interest she has in China. She is thinking of Lowell." Then he laughed at his own weakness and shook himself free from the imp.

"The government is not transacting any business with China," he replied. "As I have stated, this country only imports from China what the Rockefeller estate purchases. You know that in Aldrich Rockefeller's time, China ordered all American corporations to wind up their business in that country and confiscated all interests which the Rockefellers held there. This, of course, was an insult which the warlike Aldrich could not brook. He was willing to withdraw from China, but declined to do so unless fairly compensated to the full measure of his holdings there. The result was the Chinese-American war which was fought out on the Pacific. The complete defeat of the Chinese navy at the great battle of Honolulu placed the Chinese ports at the mercy of the American guns and China sued for peace.

"Standard, however, had decided on complete concentration of its operations in America and a treaty of peace was concluded by which China paid a war indemnity and purchased the Rockefeller holdings in the empire with its bonds. The vast resources and labor power of China have made it possible to discharge the indemnity, but there is a considerable balance still due the Standard.

"Last year's rice crop in Standard's fields in America was a failure, as you know, and Mr. Adams is now negotiating on behalf of the Estate for the purchase of a supply of rice which he will accept as part payment of the balance which China still owes. He regards it as better than gold, and I think he is right, for we need it."

"I thank you, Mr. Endicott," said Helen, when he had concluded. "You have given me the information I wanted. But," she continued, pointing up the avenue, "here comes a messenger in great haste. He probably has a summons for you."

The messenger, dressed in the uniform of his service, came running toward them and saluting the Secretary, handed him a note.

"The President wishes to know when it will be convenient to receive him," said the Secretary, after reading the note. "I will tell the messenger to say that you will be at your apartments immediately, if you wish."

"Certainly," assented Helen. "I understand the purpose. But, Mr. Endicott," she added, "I have decided not to accept any plan to take the estate of Morgan Rockefeller over to myself."

The Secretary looked at her searchingly and almost severely. But he saw only the quiet, calm and beautiful face which gave no evidence of agitation and excitement.

"She is playful," thought Endicott. "But she plays with the whole world. She does not mean it."

"Come," he said aloud, "shall I escort Your Excellency?" He said "Your Excellency" with a note of reverence and Helen started perceptibly as she heard so significant a title applied to her by this man of power. For a moment the visions came swarming back again, and the old pride of the Hall of History momentarily asserted itself. But only for a moment.

"Let us go," she said simply, and they returned to the White House together.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE SUIT REJECTED.

It was suspected throughout the republic that President Adams and his cabinet were planning some sort of a coup in connection with the Estate. It was also suspected that Helen Channing was regarded at the White House as the rightful heir and that some course was proposed by which the estate would be restored to her. Many people were pronounced in their approval of any plan which would clarify the sisuation and settle the problem which produced confusion. Whether any large number disapproved the White House plan, as it was called, could never be ascertained, for discretion was as great a virtue under the commercial system as under the military.

The Estate's despotic, economic control was so complete that men and women were unwilling to jeopardize position by exercising the theoretical right to speak freely.

The Press, owned and controlled by Standard, said nothing of "plans" but reported every expression in favor of restoring the estate to Miss Channing. This it did without comment, but so artfully as to leave an impression that public sentiment was unanimously favorable to Miss Channing.

If there was opposition it was nursed in secret.

President Adams neither believed nor suspected that any opposition would develop and he was convinced that if it did, it could have no influence to prevent the result which he desired.

The President had sent to ascertain if Helen was prepared to receive him with Judge Brewer and Attorney General Holmes, with reference to her interest in the Estate. Learning that she was walking in the park with Secretary Endicott, he deemed the time auspicious and sent to ask if the lady and the Secretary would both be present in case a conference at the lady's apartments should be regarded with favor.

A half hour later, the President and the two lawyers with formidable-looking packages were seated with Miss Helen and Secretary Endicott, in a consultation which the President considered the most important during his administration of the Estate.

"Miss Channing," said the President, after all the formalities of his system of etiquette were concluded, "you are aware that the people of America are dissatisfied with the action of your deceased uncle in attempting to disinherit you, his only legal heir. The will by which he assumed to devise the vast wealth which he and his ancestors had accumulated, to the Government of the United States in trust, bears on its face many evidences of an unsound and unsettled mental condition. But beyond this, he seems to have misapprehended the legal powers of our national government. The will is invalid both because the testator was of unsound mind when it was made, and because the devisee had no capacity to accept and none to administer the trust sought to be created. These reasons, in themselves, are sufficient to justify you in asking the courts to set the will aside and to establish your own title. But apart from your natural wish to succeed to the Rockefeller property, you are called upon to aid the state by relieving it from an embarrassment which must ultimately prove disastrous. Both patriotism and duty require that you, whom birth and circumstances have designated for that purpose, insist that your rights be restored and that the terrible mistake of your uncle be corrected. Judge Brewer, will you read the petition, by which Miss Channing will invoke the decree of the court in her behalf?"

Judge Brewer being thus addressed, opened one of the packages which he had brought, and taking a document from it unfolded it. The Judge, it should be understood, was one of the most eminent and honorable of his profession and his opinion on any legal question was of the very highest non-judicial authority.

Miss Channing," said the Judge, addressing Helen, and evidently intending to preface his reading by some explanation, "the petition is necessarily somewhat lengthy. I hope it will not prove tiresome, but in order that Your Excellency may be able to verify it, I deem the reading imperative."

"Mr. President, and Judge Brewer," interposed Helen, who had listened respectfully to what both gentlemen had said, but who appeared less eager and interested than seemed entirely natural, "it will not be necessary to read the petition. I have given this matter—"

"Pardon me," said the president, interrupting Helen, the tone of his voice suggesting some impatience. "Judge Brewer tells us that you cannot verify the petiion unless you read it or it is read to you. It is routine work with which we cannot dispense."

Something about the president's look as he spoke, irritated Helen. Still, her manner did not betray the fact and she accepted his words calmly. It now occurred to her for the first time, that the president might even attempt to command her. That one of her race could be overridden by any one, was not conceivable to her. If there was to be a contest, however, she well new that every vestige of vanity, whether it was suggested by her family distinction or desire to assert her individuality, must be excluded from her mind and art, for vanity was weakness, and the president being without it, thought only of his purpose. She realized that in a contest with such a person the strength of her cause would be the only basis on which she might hope to succeed.

"You misunderstand, Mr. President," she said. "I merely desired to assert that as I can not give my consent to this suit or court proceeding, it will not be necessary for Judge Brewer to read the petition or for me to verify it. I have given this matter much thought and I wish to propose a different solution altogether of what President Adams calls the great problem. But I cannot sign or verify the petition or authorize you to proceed in my name."

The statesmen and lawyers looked at one another. They did not comprehend. Judge Brewer leaned over toward the president as if proposing to whisper to him, but said nothing. Secretary Endicott alone remained undisturbed.

"This decision of mine seems to surprise you," resumed Helen, after a pause. "You have never doubted that I would gladly accept this responsibility which you imagine any person should covet, because you call it wealth. But why does the government want to avoid it? Why does Your Excellency, full of wisdom and experience as you are, wish to shift the burden and place it on the shoulders of a young woman without experience? This vast, concentrated estate is not necessary to my happiness and I do not want it."

Helen had become quite animated now and felt conscious of the superiority of her position and its consequent strength.

"She is beautiful, and she is wise, too," thought Endicott. "What a fool one has to be to allow himself to be submerged by wealth and worry."

"Miss Channing," said President Adams, at last, speaking with impressive dignity, "you owe something to your country, if not to humanity. I cannot conceive that you speak seriously. I and my associates have planned to retore this estate to the legitimate line. The American people demand it and they also demand that, as the legitimate heir, you should accept it as your duty."

The President's dignity became severe and his final words were uttered imperiously. Helen's eyes flashed. Rising from her seat she approached the long table behind which the lawyers and the president sat.

"President Adams!" she exclaimed, "I know what you have attempted. You have made a great mistake. It is not my duty to accept this burden and it is not the duty of any living person to do so. You and the school of economists to which you belong choose to call this property mine. It is not mine, but belongs to those who created it. You can never make it possible for me to enjoy this wealth which others have created, and which I can only use to establish my right to administer it. No doubt you really believe I am needed to hold together this great system which the Rockefeller family have invented. It was for this reason that Your Excellency has surrounded me, your guest, with the luxury and circumstance of royalty. Your dependents, apprehending your purpose and feeling that they should aid you in their own way, presume to interfere also, and instead of being the royal creature you would have me believe myself, I find that, in all my luxury, in my splendid apartments and among my gorgeous attendants, I am only a captive after all."

The president did not interrupt her. All sat silent and serious as Helen spoke, as if they thought it scarcely worth while to enter into a discussion and did not understand how to handle this unexpected incident.

"You are silent, gentlemen, and feel that your difficulties are increasing," continued Helen, after a pause. "You will scarcely believe that any advice I can offer you would be acceptable. But I have refused to receive the estate of Morgan Rockefeller as my own, because I am sure there is a far better way to dispose of it. Let it be restored to those who created it. Let the burdens be borne equally by the people."

Helen was aware that the gentleman before her did not consider her opinions of sufficient importance to provoke even a sneer.

"You cannot be expected, Miss Helen," said the president, "to understand those things. Your views are not practical."

"I am afraid, Mr. President," resumed Helen, "that no views which can be expressed at this time are practical. But this must be finally and positively understood—that I will not be a party to any effort which is directed to breaking my uncle's will."

"But," remonstrated the president, as if he had resolved to treat Helen's attitude as a mild burst of insanity, "Judge Brewer, who is very high authority on these subjects—I think I may say, the highest authority in America—tells us that the federal government has no power or capacity to act as trustee. Therefore, this devise is invalid, and will be set aside on my personal application to the court. But I prefer not to act in this proceeding. As the benefit is yours, I have felt that you should appeal to the court. Now that the people are determined to have the matter settled in your favor, if you will not make the appeal, I must do so."

"If Your Excellency could think it possible for any suggestion of mine to be worthy of consideration," returned Helen, "I would be glad to submit a plan for the removal of the burden of this estate from the government as well as from your shoulders and mine." Helen then gave them an outline of the history of the Reapers of the World and its purpose as a fraternal organization. Endicott seemed to be deeply interested, but the President looked up now and then, and smiled more with amusement than sarcasm.

"Now my plan is this," continued Helen, after she had stated as much of the history of the order as she thought necessary to an understanding of the purpose. "The Reapers of the World will offer the executor of the will of Morgan Rockefeller a fair and reasonable price for the entire estate."

"Do you know how much that would be?" asked the President, smiling incredulously. "The estate is valued at three hundred billion dollars."

"The Reapers can pay that," replied Helen.

The President looked up suddenly, and throwing down the pencil with which he had been nervously making grotesque figures on paper as he listened indifferently to what was being said by the girl, turned and gazed searchingly into her face.

"Is this heir of Rockefeller really demented?" he thought. Then he asked aloud, thinking that he would quickly show her how foolish her remarks were: "How many members of this secret society have you who are paying a dollar a month into a trust fund?"

"We have twenty thousand members," she answered, "and I am told that we have two hundred and fifty thousand dollars."

The President's eyes flashed in anger. "There!" he exclaimed. "I thought so. The people are always developing follies and I think your family did well to place secret fraternal combinations under the ban. How long do you think it would take to pay three hundred billion dollars at that rate? Twenty thousand a month would be two hundred and forty thousand a year. It would take you a million and a quarter years to pay for it."

"I expected this," quietly remarked Helen. "If the estate should, under the provisions of the will, sell this property to the Reapers of the World—"

"Then the Reapers of the World would be a monopoly and the twenty thousand members would be plutocrats and lord it over the rest of us!" interrupted the President.

"I would not expect Your Excellency to sell to the Reapers without imposing conditions," explained Helen. "If you sold this estate on the installment plan, as I would suggest, my supposition is that you would require the order to admit every citizen of the United States of good character into its ranks. This would mean every man and woman. You would also require that the children of all members would be admitted at a certain age. The only condition would be that each subscribe to the constitution and by-laws of the order. The payment of one dollar per month would, if all the adult citizens 'joined,' amount to about eighty million dollars per month or nine hundred and sixty million a year. That would be nine billion six hundred million in ten years and in a little more than three hundred years the full amount would be paid."

Judge Brewer had thrown himself back in his chair and was following the speaker's words with deep interest and close attention.

"But," he interposed, "if Miss Channing will permit me to ask her, do you not think the burden thus placed on your order would be too heavy? Three hundred billion is a vast debt."

"Do I understand correctly, that the will devises this estate to the government for the benefit of the people?"asked Helen. "Paying to the government is paying to the people—that was the theory, at any rate, which our revolutionary ancestors had. If the government did its duty and carried out the terms of the will, it would find no better method of distributing the annual or monthly payments made by the order than to return them to the fraternal treasury immediately. It might be a matter of mere bookkeeping. Certainly the government would not allow a surplus to accumulate."

Judge Brewer nodded his head and smiled approvingly. Not so the President. As a practical politician and statesman, the latter had no confidence in any but established, tested and time honored systems. All else was theory. Besides, he, like most rulers who depend on force to secure stability and permanence in society, had no confidence in human nature.

"Your fraternal society would be a mob. You would have a million different opinions. You could do no business and you would break up in a riot," he declared.

Helen felt that she had won the attention of these men and somehow, it seemed to her that Judge Brewer understood her.

"The fraternal society would not do any business," she explained. "I understand that in 1908 many fraternal societies existed. If a member paid his dues for years and then failed to pay, he forfeited all benefits. They were in the habit of investing their surplus in bonds or stocks. But they did no business except to send their treasurer over to the annual meeting of the corporation and vote the stock. When dividends were paid on the stock or interest on the bonds the fraternal treasurer collected both. But the corporations were operated on a scientific business basis. Suppose in 1908 my honored ancestor, John D. Rockefeller, had been a fraternal order instead of a commercial autocrat. Don't you suppose that business would have continued? I simply propose that the Reapers of the World take the stock held by the Standard Oil Trust and hold it as the trust has done. The geniuses of the business world will still do the practical business."

"Well," said the President with a sigh, "I can see that it will be best to defer this conference to another time. Gentlemen," he continued, turning to the Attorney General and Secretary Endicott, "I have another appointment and it may be well for us to withdraw now. Judge Brewer, will you call at the Executive office tomorrow afternoon?"

The gentlemen took their leave of Helen in the formal manner which the President's etiquette required and left her alone. Secetary Endicott could not resist the impulse to say to her, however, as he bade her adieu: "Miss Helen, I may not agree with your conclusions, but I admire your courage in attempting to reject the estate and your skill in presenting your theories." He did not accompany the President to his apartments, but as he turned to go in another direction, he was aware of the fact that the President and Judge Brewer had become earnestly involved in a discussion as they moved away.

CHAPTER XLII.

REVELATIONS.

Moreland Hughes, for distinguished services in Colombia and in recognition of his unusual abilities, had been elevated by the Estate to the position of Commander in Chief of Standard's Detective Department, with the title of General. As such, he was the best informed man in America as to what the people thought and how the people felt.

The day after Helen announced her unwillingness to commence proceedings to obtain title to the Estate, General Hughes called at the executive office.

The call was opportune and the President greeted him cordially.

"General," said the Chief Magistrate, "you realize that, as a statesman, I have had little sympathy with some of the practical regulations of the Rockefellers. Morgan prohibited secret or fraternal associations on pain of dismissal from the System's service. His theory was that the members of those organizations might co-operate industrially and interrupt his autocratic business plans. The rule which he inforced I have cancelled and I allow the people a larger measure of personal liberty. Now, after a year has elapsed since

Morgan's death, I believe secret and fraternal associations have become a menace to the stability of the Estate. You can give me some information in regard to these matters and I am glad you came in."

The President's knowledge with regard to fraternal associations did not extend beyond the facts he had heard from Helen about the Reapers of the World.

"Your Excellency must know," said the General, replying to the President's statement as if it were a question, "that I have repeatedly called attention to this subject at the Department of War, but have been as often assured that Your Excellency's policy was not to interfere. For that reason I am resolved to present the facts which I have gathered to Your Excellency, personally. Your Excellency should know that many secret societies have sprung up in the last year and one of them is already planning treason against the Estate."

The President was not, surprised at this statement, but he thought of what Helen had said the day before, and did not doubt that General Hughes had reference to the Reapers of the World.

"I know," he remarked. "The society you refer to has about twenty thousand members."

"I am certain it has over two hundred thousand in St. Louis alone," declared the General.

"Two hundred thousand! Indeed! I was not correctly informed."

The President began to think the Reapers had more ability to achieve results through numbers than he supposed. "Perhaps, after all, Helen was right," he thought. "If there are two hundred thousand in St. Louis alone, there must be many times that number in the nation." The President's anxiety was to divorce the political and economic systems. He was never concerned about Helen Channing so much as he was for the nation and the Estate.

"Your Excellency has, perhaps, read my report on this subject filed at the War office?" suggested Hughes.

The President became interested and sent for the report.

To his surprise, it did not refer to the Reapers of the World. It was also very brief.

"The Society of Silence," said the report, "pretends to have for its object the retention of the Rockefeller estate by the government. It has grown up in the six weeks succeeding the arrival of Miss Helen Channing in St. Louis and has, in the most secret manner, increased its membership from a few hundred to several millions. Each member is required to take an oath to defend with his life the nation's right to the Rockefeller estate and particularly to resist the claims of Helen Channing to acquire the title which Morgan Rockefeller devised to the American people. At that time the main demonstration is to be at the capital city and the chiefs of the society have decreed the death of Miss Channing. The men who have organized and compose this order are fanatical in the extreme and should they prevail, a revolution like that which occurred two hundred years ago in France will be enacted. The plans of the conspirators can not be learned in detail as the most extraordinary secrecy prevails."

"What!" exclaimed the President, when he had finished reading. "Why has this not been brought to my attention before?"

"The report was filed yesterday," replied the General. "The facts came to my notice by accident, and I have spent my time since, in verifying them. The most remarkable deception with which a nation ever masked its real feelings has been practiced, for to all outward appearance the people were either unaniously satisfied with the President's policy or indifferent to it."

The President looked at the General coldly and almost severely. He had the fullest confidence in the man, but he was inclined to feel that so important a matter should have been discovered and communicated to him before. Besides this, the President was naturally antagonistic to any movement of the people which did not find its inspiration in the teachings of the most conservative thinkers.

"Am I to understand," he asked, "that a revolution is proposed by this treacherous association of conspirators of which you speak?"

"Such is the plan, as far as can be learned," was the answer.

"When do you anticipate that the conspirators will carry out their plans?"

"It is impossible to learn, Your Excellency. Such is the secrecy with which the plans of the society are guarded that only one man in each city has that knowledge. All I can say is that the first assault will be made on the White House and that it is expected to be ordered soon. As I have stated, the purpose of the assault will be to gain possession of the person of Miss Channing and the conspirators, who are accepting the French revolution of two centuries ago as a model, intend to try Miss Channing for treason in having attempted to acquire the Rockefeller estate, and it is anticipated that her trial will be like that of Marie Antoinette and her punishment, when found guilty, death. You can have no doubt that she is prejudged and the members of the Society of Silence have already condemned her to execution."

The President was surprised and not a little disturbed, but he doubted not that he could compel complete submission to his will. It was a revelation, however, which he had not in the least suspected.

"It is another proof of the unreliability of the people," declared the President. "They have certainly been very unjust, even when measured by their own standards, toward Miss Channing. Only yesterday she positively refused to participate in any movement to place the title to the estate in her name or exercise control over it."

General Hughes, as a member of the Reapers of the World, was devoted to Helen as the founder of the order, and was better acquainted with her affiliations than the President was. But her absence from the meetings of the order and her environments and the reports in the public prints concerning her aspirations and expectations had produced a nebulous doubt in his mind. He was delighted to learn from the President's own lips that Helen was true to her pledges, for General Hughes had become a most zealous believer in fraternalism as a remedy for economic evils.

The President's conference with General Hughes was long and earnest and, as a result, it was decided to leave the White House on the following day, ostensibly as an incident to the management of the estate, and that Helen should be installed with the family of the President, for greater security, in the unapproachable fastnesses of Montraven Castle.

General Hughes, dressed in citizen's clothes, left the executive office and in accordance with his policy to attract as little attention to his person as possible, walked back to the city. It will be remembered by those who are acquainted with St. Louis that the government buildings are on the south side of the city and that the public and family hotels which occupy thousands of acres in that beautiful district are occupied exclusively by members of the government and those engaged in the hotel service. This district is about fourteen miles from Montraven Castle and the vast modern city extends between and all around these aristocratic centers.

As the General entered the business part of the city it seemed to him that the crowds on the streets were greater than usual. On every square, people stood in groups, but appeared rather to be waiting than to be entertained by present diversions. He stopped several times and spoke to persons whom he knew and among them several members of the Reapers of the World. He well knew that there were no disturbers among these and that their sentiments were invariably patriotic.

"What are these crowds for?" he asked one of them, an old man whose long white hair flowed down his back, but who stood as straight and walked as briskly as if he had hardly seen twenty-five winters.

"I can't make out," was the answer. "The people say little and seem sullen. I think from what I have heard they are waiting for the factories and shops to close. I don't know why."

"How many Reapers are there in St. Louis?" asked the General.

"About sixteen hundred," answered the old man.

"Brother, I fear treachery!' whispered the General, catching the old man by the arm. "Go!" he commanded. "Find the Reapers everywhere and do it as quickly as you can. Miss Helen Channing is in danger and she is true as steel to the purpose of our order. I have this day learned from the President's own lips that she has been offered the Estate and has positively rejected it."

The man, an old fraternalist and one of the charter members of the order knew General Hughes and regarded him as the chief hope of the order, next to Helen Channing. He listened to the General's account of his interview with the President with the deepest concern and some agitation. The Reapers had never really questioned Helen's loyalty and notwithstanding the daily prints had magnified her movements and had openly advocated what it pleased them to call her "vindication" she was trusted implicitly by the order which she had founded, and on occasions she had been able to send them messages of encouragement and reassurance. Still the old man was glad to have further proof of her devotion to the cause.

"I believe, General," he said, "these unusual crowds have something to do with this infamous plot which you mention. I will waste no time, but where shall our people meet?"

"Tell them to go to the park in front of the White House immediately."

Hughes saw the old man hurry away and hastened to the Central station of the Standard, himself. There, he communicated with the President by telephone. As a result the President decided to transfer his household and guest to Montraven at once. A little later, the General learned that the President had sent to ask Helen to prepare to make the change and was informed that she, accompanied by Secretary Endicott and Mrs. Locksley, who had arrived from Boston, were autoing in the country.

The President dispatched messengers in all directions with instructions to intercept Helen and request her to avoid the White House and go to Montraven instead. He had no doubt, because of the number of such messengers, that she and her party would be apprised of the danger and, having taken all the precaution possible to secure their safety, gave directions to have all, except the soldiers whom he caused to be stationed within, to avail themselves of the underground passages which proceeded from the White House to different points, and to make their way to Montraven so as to attract little notice. The President was not apprehensive of present danger but deemed that the prestige of the government should not be jeopardized and that he should take no chances in such a case.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE SOCIETY OF SILENCE.

"I declare!" exclaimed Secretary Endicott, consulting his watch as the auto sped swiftly along the beautiful avenue beyond St. Louis. "It is later than I thought. It is now seven o'clock and it will be three hours before we can reach the White House. I think we had better turn back, Miss Channing."

"Indeed! I am sure we should," said Helen in surprise. "Kindly tell the chauffeur to turn back, Mr. Endicott," she requested. "Have you enjoyed the ride, Auntie?" she asked of Mrs. Locksley who sat by her side, the picture of contentment.

"Yes, indeed! I have enjoyed the scenery because it is new and because it is wonderfully good to be with you again, Helen," replied Mrs. Locksley. " It is not like Boston, though," she continued. "I would like it better if we were in Boston."

Secretary Endicott smiled with amusement. "Well, Boston is delightful to those who know it well," he remarked. The auto was now speeding back swiftly over the smooth pavement toward the city.

"Judge Brewer said last evening that he believed your fraternal plan is a solution of the problem of social and domestic life," observed Mr. Endicott, changing the subject and addressing Helen. "He was greatly impressed with your idea and declared that he was going to look into it and make a legal study of its possibilities. I suspect, however, that the fraternal system is too visionary to be applied practically."

"Don't you believe, Mr. Endicott," asked Helen very earnestly, "what Jesus of Nazareth really did teach was, that the world would grow better and be saved just in proportion as it abandoned its rule of force and adopted those policies of liberality and moderation which are dictated by love? Wasn't love rather than force his remedy? What is liberty which men prize so much and which latter-day nations take pride in extending to their people? Is it not a love-light which the spirit of Christianity has lit along the avenues of Intelligence and Hope? No heathen or pagan nation, and no non-christian civilization ever enjoyed liberty such as now prevails in nations which accept Christianity. In such countries and such civilizations the rule is autocratic and peace and security are dependent on Force rather than Love. Where force is the rule the people are nearly always turbulent and then religious fanaticism is intolerant and dangerous. Do you not recall that in the early periods of our national history, the hordes of ignorant, suspicious and impoverished immigrants were converted in one generation by free schools and the absolute protection afforded for religious worship into orderly and intelligent as well as liberal citizens? It was Christ's spirit of brotherly love extended, so to speak, to the Gentiles. Where all restrictions are removed from religious worship the prejudices which incite the sects to cruelty and intolerance disappear and brotherly love enters the system. I think the policy of force, which the old governments have stood for, is an obstacle to the happiness of man and that they have done more to disturb and agitate society than to establish security. The Caesars and Napoleons were all impractical and ended in disaster and ruin with the systems which they advocated and for which they battled incessantly and fruitlessly. Christ's system is the only practical one and, so far as it has been established, is the only lasting one."

Endicott smiled and assented. "You are right, Miss Channing," he said. "Your views are absolutely correct and indisputable. But while they are correct and indisputable, you may be sure that the world will go right on ignoring their correctness and will grovel and battle and suffer just as it always has done. You cannot make this world perfect in a day or a generation."

"Is it not unfair, Mr. Endicott," returned Helen, "to insist that, because I believe we can find a way to approach more nearly to the high ideal of justice, by distributing rent, interest and profits where they will do good, rather than to let them accumulate in the hands of those who do not need them, I am therefore expecting to reach heaven in a single bound?"

"Have you not proposed a greater task than the world is ready to perform?" suggested the Secretary.

"Not greater than the world is ready to perform if it can get a system by which to perform it!" replied

Helen. "My ancestors are distinguished and are entitled to distinction, because they not only provided a system for men to work in, but also found means to compel men to work in in that system. The world went to school to Rockefeller number one and has been learning from all the Rockefellers since. The world learned the system and its application. I sometimes think that God's first instrument, when he finds the people ready for a new system, is a dictator whom he invests with autocratic power. Such have been my ancestors. But the time has come for another great step forward and the fraternal principle may be introduced into the Rockefeller system. This will not make men angels. I do not contend that. But it will take away many of the excuses which men offer for wrong doing. It will remove the incentive for those evils which are maintained for purely commercial purposes. It will place the competitive conflict on a higher plane than that where the necessaries of physical life are the sole reward. Competition for mental and spiritual gain alone is worth the struggle."

The auto had now come to one of the Rest Houses which the Rockefeller Supply Company maintains along the main avenues of travel in the rural districts. Secretary Endicott suggested that they stop and partake of refreshments and this having been done, they continued their trip and the auto sped on its way with the rapidity of a meteor.

It was nearly nine o'clock when they saw the dome of the capital in the distance. As they approached it, however, they became aware that dense crowds had gathered in that vicinity and that some excitement of an unusual character was attracting people there in great numbers. Soon the crowds were so dense as to impede travel. The chauffeur slowed up and in the twilight the faces which were turned to Helen seemed to wear an expression of anger and disdain. Helen at first regarded it as merely a fancy on her part, but as the auto proceeded slowly the occupants noticed that the crowds closed in to the rear and grew denser and were less willing to open their ranks in front.

"What is the occasion of this gathering?" Endicott asked of several of the bystanders; but they only looked at him and made no answer.

Suddenly a large, powerful man in the crowd seized the chauffeur and pulled him roughly from his seat on the slowly running car and quickly took the latter's place and brought the auto to a stop.

"What is the meaning of this?" demanded the Secretary, while Helen and Mrs. Locksley stood up in agitation.

The large man on the seat jumped down, but did not answer. The crowd was so dense now that it pressed closely against the auto on all sides. Not a man spoke. The silence of that vast multitude seemed uncanny, and a dread arose even in the stout heart of the Secretary. The faces of Helen and Mrs. Locksley were pale, but their courage did not forsake them. As for the latter, she was ready to do battle for Helen even to the death.

"What do you men mean?" she cried out to the crowd. "Why do you stand in the way? Don't you know that this is Miss Helen Channing?"

Still there was no answer. Still the crowd was silent.

The Secretary moved out on one of the steps of the vehicle, but found no room to descend.

"Open your ranks and let us pass," he shouted. "John," he directed, speaking to the chauffeur, who was attempting to regain his seat, but was kept back by many strong hands, "take your place and drive on."

"Let me go," yelled the chauffeur, making an impetuous effort to free himself. But the silent men held him fast.

"Why do you not speak? What is the matter? Why is this crowd here?" again demanded the Secretary.

Then there were shouts heard some distance away, and a tremor seemed to stir the multitude, but still it remained silent. The men became active and made signs to one another. Nearly all of them except those in the immediate vicinity of the auto turned toward the direction from which the shouts came. Endicott, who was unable to comprehend the meaning of the demonstration and who was confounded more by the silence than by any fear, stood erect in the auto and looked around.

"Be seated, ladies," he said; and Helen and Mrs. Locksley complied. When the shouts were raised in the distance, Endicott noticed that the silent men around him drew revolvers. He was unarmed, but, while he was angry and felt that he and his companions were being hindered in their progress, it did not occur to him that this hindrance was anything more than an incident of some unlawful demonstration, the cause of which he did not know.

In this dilemma he could do nothing but glare at the men who silently glared at him.

"You men should know that you are doing us a great injustice by this uncalled-for interference," he ventured. But, although the men heard him, they remained silent.

Suddenly the ranks of the crowd opened and a number of masked men, all armed with rifles, came marching through the avenue, one of them leading. They came up to the auto and the leader broke the silence. While the shouting continued in the distance he spoke in a loud, clear voice, which was evidently partly disguised, and said:

"Secretary Endicott, we know you and have no business with you. We represent the Society of Silence, whose mission is to act, not speak. You may go. The elderly lady with you may go. Helen Channing, on behalf of the American Republic and at the instance of the Society of Silence, I arrest you on a charge preferred against you—that you have sought by fraud, diplomacy, treachery and false pretense to take from the Government of the United States that estate which has been devised to it by Morgan Rockefeller, in trust for the people. You will do well to submit without resistance; but if you refuse to accompany us we will be obliged to use force."

Endicott was standing on the steps of the auto in the same position which he occupied when the attack on the chauffeur occurred. He heard the words of the man before him. Endicott was not one who became excited. He coolly surveyed the silent crowd, and when the leader had ceased speaking, without the slightest trace of anger or fear in his manner or voice, he said:

"I do not know who you are or what your purpose may be. I do not know what you mean, and it is not to you that Helen Channing or myself need answer to any charges which you may make. This pretended charge which you express is false. But whether true or false I—William C. Endicott, Secretary of War, on behalf of the Government of the United States of America—demand that this crowd disperse and that you cease your unlawful conduct. For Miss Helen Channing, I say now, that she refuses to submit to your insolent and unlawful demand, and for myself, I refuse to permit you to lay hands upon her."

Endicott had not finished when the masked leader waved aloft a cane or wand, from which sprang a flame each time he waved it. It was probably a signal, for, as the one concluded his speech and the other lowered the cane, three men sprang forward to the car and attempted to lay hold of the Secretary. The latter, although never turbulent, resisted the assault and his assailants failed to reach him. The first he knocked completely down. The second staggered back into the crowd. The third stepped back in time to avoid the fate of the first. But all three sprang forward again and others came to their aid.

The Secretary was pulled from the auto and securely bound.

Meantime the shouting which had been heard in the distance had become louder and more distinct, and a perfect fusillade of explosions, as of small arms being discharged, was heard. The crowd around Helen and her companions was apparently agitated to the verge of panic. Still it preserved its remarkable silence.

The masked men, having secured the Secretary, again started for the auto where the two women, being unable to find a way of escape through the wall of human enemies which surrounded them, still remained. Mrs. Locksley placed herself between the assailants and Helen, but was soon brushed aside. The first of the assailants stepped up into the auto and was about to lay hold of Helen and drag her to the ground, when the crowd seemed to break and waver. A tumult arose and the man who had entered the auto, instead of seizing his victim, drew his revolver and jumped to the ground again.

A new set of combatants had forced its way through the dense crowd and many had fallen before its advance. But although the mass wavered and was nearly panic-stricken, the silence was continued and the multitude, while it opened a passage for the shouting, rushing and fighting band, closed behind it. The Society of Silence, obedient to the signals from the leader's fiery wand, and fanatical in the belief that they were pursuing a policy dictated by patriotism and the public good, stood silent, fast and firm.

Helen was horrified.

Her experience in Watertown came vividly to her recollection.

She realized now that she was the object of this manifestation of discontent. She saw men fighting and falling around her, and several bullets whistled past her.

But she neither screamed nor fainted.

Suddenly, while the men fought in the darkness, and just as those who appeared to be forcing their way through the mass of silent beings who surged and crowded around her, had nearly reached her, myriads of great flames flashed up in the direction of the White House. A deep report, like an explosion, resounded through the air, and the earth trembled and rocked like the billows of the ocean The detonation of the report was still loud when it was followed by another nearer and more awful in its significance. Still another, and yet a fourth and a fifth shook the earth and flaring red flames leaped up through the night and seemed to blaze to the very moon and the swinging stars. Fragments of wood, spars, rock and earth filled the air and some portions of them flew and fell on the avenue where Helen's auto rocked on the broken pavement. The smoke became stifling, and Helen, fainting and struck by a flying spar, fell over the side of the swaying car to the pavement, bleeding and unconscious.

The combatants, in the confusion and terror of an overwhelming catastrophe, ceased their contentions, but the members of the Society of Silence who were not overwhelmed and destroyed, being actuated by a conception of duty rather than influenced by great love, forgetting their purpose and plan, fled precipitately, leaving their dead and wounded where they had been stricken by foe or falling debris.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE LAW OF FORCE.

A revelation of horrors confronted the American people on the morning of Independence Day, 1991.

The newspapers everywhere contained the awful story of a night's disaster.

The Associated Press dispatches from the capitol city were red firebrands of graphic description and wild terror.

Not only did they give detailed accounts of the catastrophe which had destroyed the political capital, the executive mansion and some of the most costly public buildings, but they told of the violent and sudden hurling of one hundred and fifty thousand souls into eternity.

More astounding still and a hundred times more terrifying was the information, plainly communicated to the world as a warning, that every city of twenty thousand inhabitants or more, in the United States, was similarly mined and that the military authorities were in a position to suppress every insurrection and rebellion with as great facility as General Edison Grant had suppressed that of the treasonable Society of Silence.

"The Society of Silence," the dispatches said, "planned this attack on the White House with the most treacherous secrecy. Every member, it appears, was sworn to silence. In its meetings all business was conducted by signs. No man spoke. In carrying out the orders of the society no man dared to speak, on pain of severe punishment, unless specially instructed to do so. The training of half a century in co-operative action had made it possible to effectuate so astonishing a plan, and the plan itself had been so successful that the authorities were completely baffled.

"It was by the merest chance that President Adams learned of the purpose of the Society of Silence to attack the White House and take the Chief Magistrate and Helen Channing prisoners. He was, however, in a position to protect himself. He directed his household to proceed to Montraven Castle and stationed a body of troops in the White House.

"Unfortunately, Miss Helen Channing could not be found. She had gone with her former guardian, Mrs. Locksley, and the Secretary of War, William C. Endicott, into the country. Messengers were dispatched in all directions to apprise her of the danger. Meantime, the members of the Society of Silence gathered in vast numbers around the White House. Their presence was doubly startling and oppressive, it is said, because of the uniform and absolute silence which was steadfastly maintained.

"President Adams, in the security of Montraven Castle, received communications every few minutes from the White House. He was informed of each demonstration. At seven o'clock an effort was made by the Society to enter the main hall. When this hostile demonstration occurred the President turned to General Edison Grant and said: 'General Grant, I now place the responsibility of suppressing this insurrection on you, as general of the army.'

"General Hughes, Chief of the Standard Detective force, together with Mr. Alden Lowell, who had that afternoon returned from a successful mission to China, were instructed to proceed to the White House and report the situation and acts of the besieging mob to General Armstrong, who was in charge of the body of soldiers stationed there.

"General Grant then introduced President Adams to the military chamber of whose presence President Adams was unaware. (Here the newspaper account contains a detailed description of the Military Chamber, with whose mechanism the reader is already familiar.)

"It was decided that an object lesson was required to enable the Society of Silence throughout the United States, whose membership is understood to number many millions, to realize the futility of its unhallowed designs. General Grant's unqualified opinion was that the five magazines in the mines beneath the White House, the Capitol, War, Navy and Commerce buildings should be ignited. This, it was believed, would destroy those buildings and every other building and material form within a well defined area.

"General Armstrong was notified by telephone to order every building vacated within the condemned area and then conduct his soldiers through underground passages to a place of security.

"Complying with their orders, General Hughes and Mr. Lowell hastened to the White House. When they came to Roosevelt Square, near the statue of the famous statesman and hero after whom the square is named, a man pushed his way through the crowd, and, recognizing General Hughes, informed him that Miss Helen Channing and party, including Secretary Endicott, had been surrounded and that, unless help arrived soon, she and her companions would, perhaps, suffer at the hands of the assembled mob. He also declared that many partisans of Miss Channing were present in the multitude who would gladly follow any leader in an attempt to rescue her.

"Mr. Alden Lowell, without an instant's hesitation, offered to rally the friends of Miss Channing and suggested that General Hughes proceed to the White House alone. It so happened that a large number of the friends of Miss Channing were already gathered together near the Roosevelt statue, and Mr. Lowell had no difficulty in enlisting them in his cause. They seem to have been forewarned of danger and were armed with revolvers. Quickly forming his men into a flying wedge, the intrepid young man, shouting 'The Reapers! The Reapers!' which was adopted as a rallying cry, charged into the ranks of the mob.

"On the first charge the silent mob opened its ranks for some rods, but the rest were so solidly packed together that they involuntarily restrained one another from giving way. The assailants, however, succeeded in clearing quite a space around them. Again and again did the flying wedge attack the silent mob, discharging their firearms as they did so, and each time succeeded in making progress through the solid wall of human beings, nearer to Miss Channing. Each time many of the rescuing party were killed or wounded, and more of the Society of Silence lay hushed forever in the street. At last, the struggle of those of the mob who were most exposed, to escape the repeated assaults, effected a partial opening, which enabled Lowell and his heroic followers, still shouting 'The Reapers! The Reapers!' to fight their way through to where the lady whom they were intent on rescuing sat alone. The sight of her, surrounded and threatened, encouraged them to redouble their efforts, and Alden Lowell seemed to carry all before him as he threw himself on the masked men who opposed his final charge.

"Meantime, General Hughes had gained entrance to the White House. The soldiers were soon on their way through the underground secret passages, and the occupants of all buildings in the condemned district were notified to seek safety in flight. In half an hour from the time General Hughes and Alden Lowell parted company, Hughes was on his way to Roosevelt Square. He had seen the mob pour into the government buildings in search of the President. He knew that the mines beneath the buildings would not reach Roosevelt Square. Arriving at the statue, he found means to communicate from a wireless station with Montraven. Scarcely were the last words of his message spoken when the explosions occurred. The effect of these beggars description. Every building in the condemned district was so completely obliterated that it would be impossible from any external evidence to find where each was located. The majority of the

Society of Silence in St. Louis were probably in the destroyed district, and of those none escaped. 'Ruin' does not suffice to express the result of this awful object lesson furnished by General Grant to the people of America. 'Horror,' 'Death,' 'Obliteration,' 'Annihilation'—merely suggest the tragedy through which the beautiful political capitol of America has illustrated the Law of Force.

"At the instant of the great explosion the mob of silence on the outskirts of the condemned district disappeared like shadows. The rescuers remained, under the command of the heroic and intrepid Lowell, at their post. It is said that the earth in that locality trembled as if an earthquake shock had occurred. When all was quiet, however, the rescuing party began to search for Miss Channing and her companions. This was rendered difficult by the fact that much of the debris which had been thrown from the destroyed buildings had fallen and lay in heaps around them. Many of the rescuers had been struck and were injured and the wounded as well as the dead and dying lay beneath the wreckage.

"Alden Lowell found Miss Channing bleeding and unconscious and carried her in his arms as rapidly as the obstacles in the way would permit, to one of the neighboring hotels. The surgeons who were summoned found the young lady had received a severe cut on the head, caused, evidently, by a flying spar.

"The nation has, however, lost one of its most promising statesmen, Honorable William C. Endicott, Secretary of War, whom the mob had bound hand and foot and who suffered fatal injuries of an internal nature as a result of being struck by falling debris. He was unconscious and beyond medical aid when discovered. Mrs. Locksley, Miss Channing's former guardian, who accompained the heiress and Secretary Endicott, had also been bound by the mob, but received no injuries, and being released took her place at the bedside of her ward."

The death of the Secretary was regarded as a public calamity and President Adams was deeply affected when he learned that his favorite counselor was no more. The entire nation went into mourning. Flags were displayed at half mast and work was generally suspended. The President, however, did not reproach himself for permitting General Grant to "press the buttons" which destroyed fifty million dollars worth of property and which lost to the nation the services of one great man.

"The lesson is wholesome," he said. "It is better to destroy fifty million ourselves than to permit a misguided populace to destroy one billion. It is better to destroy one hundred and fifty thousand people in one place and in a few minutes than to disorganize society and let its factions murder one another to the number of several millions. Such is the Law of Force. History is saved by this action from another chapter like that of the French Revolution. Mankind is saved from another Reign of Terror."

CHAPTER XLV.

THE LAW OF LOVE.

The flashlight of the conflagration had revealed to Helen before she became unconscious the form and features of Alden Lowell, and the light went out of her mind with the impression of that scene of strife and heroism indelibly fixed upon it.

So, too, she recovered consciousness only to find herself in the strong arms of him whose presence there seemed miraculous.

Whatever strength she may have felt because of the great purpose to which her life was devoted, she now realized, in spite of the pain which she suffered, that she was a woman and that her happiness lay in another's might and strength. And now she knew that Alden was that other.

Satisfying himself that Miss Channing's injuries were not serious, Alden left her with Mrs. Locksley and the attendants and returned to the scene of the disaster where thousands of those who were on the outskirts of the condemned district were killed or injured by debris thrown up by the explosions.

All the night he worked with untiring zeal, giving succor to the wounded and dying and directing many of those employed in the rescue service.

In the morning he called to ask after Miss Channing and learned from Mrs. Locksley, who overwhelmed him with appreciation, that the lady was resting easy and that she had repeatedly asked after him. But a feeling of resentment rankled in his breast and he could not see her then. Why had she not acknowledged his letter? Why had she treated him with indifference and perhaps contempt? He would content himself with asking after her in the future, and when she was recovered from her injuries he would meet her on the plane of fraternal work and never refer to the letter again. It seemed impossible that such forgetfulness as hers could be either explained or condoned.

Two days after her misfortune Helen was well enough to be removed to sumptuous apartments which had been prepared for her at Montraven Castle. She was able to sit up and in another week she was so much improved as to be taken on daily drives in the great Montraven Park. She knew that Alden had been sufficiently interested in her welfare to ask after her every day, and she longed to see him.

Many of the great men of the nation had paid their respects to her, and President Adams had called upon her personally. The advent of the political government at the citadel of the economic power, Montraven Castle, in which it was completely absorbed, caused quite a stir among the units of the system. The President had said little except to justify the holocaust, for which he felt responsible, but it was not difficult for Helen to see that he was deeply affected and that he was not the same strong man whom she had known.

"You still persist, Miss Helen," he said with a noticeable absence of his usual urbanity and his genial smile, "in having confidence in these wretched people who would have taken your life? You still believe your fraternal society can administer the estate left by Morgan Rockefeller? I have had several discussions with Judge Brewer, of late, and he seems to have become as great an advocate of the fraternal plan as yourself. I consider it Utopian, and if it were not for Brewer's position I would probably treat it with contempt. Brewer tells me that he has become a member of your order."

Helen was amazed and delighted. Judge Brewer was an unexpected acquisition. That he had concluded to identify himself with the Reapers strengthened her position much and she was so delighted that she could have thrown her arms around the President.

"You will find that the Reapers of the World will fail, as all such movements have," continued the President. "I think you would do well to reconsider your decision not to accept the estate which the law will give you. I believe I would proceed to have the will declared void on my own responsibility and force you to take the estate, but I feel that I have not long to live, and the strain will break me completely down. I owe it to myself to take needed rest." The President sighed heavily and presented a picture of hopelessness which filled Helen with sorrow.

"When I am gone, it is quite likely that there will be none to check this movement which you and

Brewer advocate. Your power is multiplied in the minds of the people by the sacrifice you propose and what you propose will doubtless result in temporary success."

"I would not feel safe for one moment," exclaimed Helen, "if your Law of Force compelled me to assume the burden which Your Excellency is allowing to crush so great and strong a man as the President of the United States. The Law of Love, of which I am a disciple and which Jesus of Nazareth taught, would never put this burden on me and never intended it for you. Oh! Mr. President, if only you could have more confidence in humanity and less in the Law of Force, the unjust burden which you assume and which you very incorrectly feel that the world places upon you, would fall from your shoulders and be very gladly borne by mankind. The world only waited for a system by which it could do so. My ancestors have provided that system and the fraternal order now furnishes a plan by which that system can be continued in operation through the Law of Love as promulgated by the Reapers of the World."

"Well," said the President, rising to go, "you were my hope. As you do not consent to accept your own, I feel that there is no other course to pursue than to have your fraternal plan investigated. A cabinet meeting has been called to consider it, and if it is thought proper to do so, a special session of Congress will be convened."

The President returned to his apartments in the castle, leaving Helen almost overcome with joy. The cause of Fraternalism mounted up to the very summit of victory. Her fondest hopes had never anticipated so glorious and speedy a success.

At Montraven her surroundings were as luxurious as those which she had enjoyed at the White House. Innumerable ladies, pages and servants attended in obedience to her will. But since her dream of the Temptation, the suggestions of royalty and the splendor of her state had become distasteful to her. She could not dispense with them, but she invoked the assistance of her servitors as little as possible. They seemed to be in her way. Not that she wanted to be alone, but that she longed for some one to commune with who would really rejoice with her and who could understand and appreciate this grand victory. She had been distressed because she had not seen Alden since the great explosion. Mrs. Locksley had informed her that he had repeatedly called and inquired as to her progress, but that he had avoided her on one pretext or another; and she believed she understood the reason, for the unanswered letter had been burning its every word into her soul ever since it had found its belated way to her. She had expected to receive him at her apartments and express her gratitude for his heroic service and gallant rescue. Now she felt that she must see him, so she quickly wrote a short note and calling a messenger bade him find Mr. Lowell and place it in his hands.

The note was as follows:

"Dear Mr. Lowell:

Auntie tells me you have called daily since the terrible night when you rescued me from death, but that you have not been willing to see me. I have great and good news for you. Can't you come to me at once?

Yours very sincerely,

Helen Channing."

No sooner had this message gone beyond recall than Helen began to think. Strangely enough, the cause which involved the welfare of the world, the cause of which she was the originator, organizer and high priestess, the cause of the world's fraternal redemption, faded from her mind. The great event which had just occurred was eclipsed by another of more moment to the girl as she realized that she was being borne swiftly to her own destiny.

It was not the world, not the Estate, not the nation which was involved now; only herself and another.

A thousand recollections rushed to her memory. Again she saw herself in the White House Park and lived over once more the scene which ensued; the agitation as she read the letter which Alden sent her from far-away China; the appearance of the handsome Secretary of War and the walk with him among the trees and flowers.

A great pang of sorrow seized her heart as she thought of the admiration she felt for the learned and great man whose tragic death had occurred in her behalf. Then the stirring scenes of old Colombia, where she had been rescue from captivity by Alden Lowell, and the picture of the battle shown by the flashlight from the red flames of the explosions were revived with startling and realistic effect. She could never forget that hero face and form, and now here was her hero coming to her and she would meet him in the light of another conflagration which was bursting into flame and consuming her heart. The devotee of humanity's cause forgot her ecstacy over the success of that cause in an access of emotion which is the sweet heritage of real human love.

It seemed a long time before Alden arrived and was ushered into Helen's presence. He presented himself with a formality which might not have concealed his agitation from one who observed the scene without being a part of it. Helen did not see that he was agitated. He did not see that she was. Lovers are blind. But in truth, Alden held fast to the memory of the unanswered letter, and however complete his subjugation to the influence of his love, that wavering vanity, which creeps into and often destroys the garden of happiness, would not leave him. The unanswered letter was a subject which he felt should not be dismissed without an explanation. Yet his fancied resentment was almost swept away by the sound of that voice and the sight of that face. He nearly surrendered to the impulse to throw himself at her feet and renew those expressions of love which were contained in his letter from the Chinese city.

As for Helen, everything had gone out of her life except the present moment.

"Mr. Lowell," she said, smiling and extending her hand, "I can never thank you sufficiently for your heroism on that awful night."

Alden took the little hand which was extended to him and his resentment disappeared."

"And you could not answer my letter?" he asked shortly.

It was not what he intended to say.

Now it suddenly occurred to him that in asking it he had revived and reiterated all the declarations contained in the letter itself. He was appalled at what he had done, for he had not planned or expected to make this meeting so important, or to even suggest the question whose answer sometimes means life or death to one's very soul.

He had crossed the rubicon, so to speak, unconsciously, and was unable to either retreat or to conceal his advance. He looked startled and almost dazed into wonderful eyes which were, for the moment, full of the courage of love and confidence, only Alden did not see it through his confusion.

"Oh! Mr. Lowell!" she exclaimed, as if in haste to explain, "I did not receive it until the day before your arrival."

She told him how she had accidently found it in her secretary's basket and the peculiar action of the secretary. "You may be sure somebody was anxious to prevent me from receiving it." This had never occurred to Helen before. "Now every day I have expected to meet you but you have never permitted it."

She looked wistfully at her hero and then her eyes fell as she saw the great joy her words had kindled.

Alden did not resist the impulse to raise that hand to his lips and murmur, as he kissed it passionately:

"My Helen! My Love!"

Then the wall of wealth and the myth of social position dissolved between these two mortals as he folded her in his arms and claimed her for his own. And she, unresisting, accepted his love and gave her heart to him forever.

There was real joy in the Rockefeller family that afternoon—the joy of love.

Oh! that this old world were so organized and managed that individuals could not assume the burdens of wealth which belong to society as a whole. Then, there would be more time for the exercise of that greatest of God's gifts to material beings—the gift of love, uncommercial and uncontaminated love—where the one man loves the one woman and the one woman loves the one man.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE MOVEMENT OF THE MANY.

The commissioners who had been appointed to appraise the Rockefeller estate completed their work in one year. Their labors were far less difficult than had been anticipated. The great Master's system of bookkeeping made it possible to ascertain the true valuation almost at a glance. The property was thereupon ordered to be sold to the highest bidder, but in no case for less than two hundred and fifty billion dollars.

The President and Cabinet were now under the influence of a master mind. They realized their utter helplessness in the face of recent events. President Adams, oppressed by the terrible fatalities which followed the attack of the Society of Silence and the manner in which that society had been destroyed, felt that he no longer had the affection of the people. His spirit was broken and he relied, without hope, but through a sense of weakness, on the new Secretary of War for guidance. Secretary Brewer, however, approached his task with a deep conviction that his plans were not only practicable but were based upon the soundest principles of humanity, and he felt the most perfect confidence in their success.

When the day arrived for the opening of bids the cabinet found only one. It was signed by Helen Channing, "Lady Harvester" of the Reapers of the World. It simply offered two hundred and fifty billion dollars for all the stock of the Standard Oil Company and agreed to pay the purchase price in installments on a basis of one dollar per month for each member of the order.

"The membership," said Secretary Brewer, after reading the bid, "has increased rapidly in the last month. I have thought best to send each member of Congress an outline of the plan of the Reapers of the World in connection with its proposed bid. As a member of the order I have also invited all members of Congress, as well as His Excellency, President Adams, and his Cabinet to become identified with the great organized movement of the people in fraternity. I have advices which show that three fourths of the House and Senate are now active members of the Reapers of the World. Your Excellency is to become a member this evening and I am happy to say that all members of the Cabinet have anticipated the rule of fraternalism by joining the order."

"The present membership numbers two hundred and fifty thousand and the acceptance of this bid, therefore, means a payment of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars per month to the government on account of the purchase price of the estate. It means more. The moment Congress approves the action of the Cabinet in accepting this bid, all intelligent Americans will desire to become associated with us, for where the wealth is which they created, there will they also go.

"I am in favor of accepting this bid with two conditions attached. First, the necessity for the secret features of the fraternal system has passed when mankind accepts that system. Secrecy was necessary when the order had enemies and when it was proscribed by the industrial power. I believe we should make the meetings hereafter open and public. I do not mean that any except members should participate actively, but that we should have no secrecy in our system. Second, this wealth is created by the labor of all men and women. Therefore a man or woman who is good enough to become a citizen of our country is entitled to be a member. In order that the units may be looked after and protected properly I shall insist that all be admitted to membership who are fit to be citizens and that no lodge shall have more than five hundred members."

The bid was accepted subject to the conditions proposed by Secretary Brewer and to the approval of Congress.

The organs of publicity, newspapers, magazines, and periodicals of every description gave the news of the Cabinet's action to all the people. It produced a profound sensation. At first it was not understood. In some quarters protests were formulated into resolutions, but these were so manifestly based on misinformation that the government did not feel concerned about them. Inquiries came from all parts of the nation with regard to the Reapers of the World.

Meantime, the belief became general that the order whose bid had been accepted by the Cabinet was about to receive the approval of Congress. Helen

Channing, Alden Lowell, General Hughes, Judge Brewer and a host of leaders were active in the movement. Nothing else was discussed in the nation but the "Reapers" and their system. The public prints unanimously favored the great movement. The churches discovered the awakened spirit of Jesus the Christ among them and many thought it was, perhaps, a suggestion of His coming again to earth and the establishment of His Kingdom.

Everywhere the people were anxious to become members of the order.

Lodges were formed in every city, town and village and the excitement was intense and joy seemed to reign supreme. Helen, Alden and Judge Brewer were in great demand everywhere.

Multitudes flocked to meet them as they went through the nation on their great campaign for the Fraternal system and the Christ idea.

Helen made no attempt to address the hosts which greeted and cheered her as she went with her companions from city to city. But Alden, whose voice and manner were so fascinating in public speech that he received the sobriequet of "Golden Mouth," spoke as one inspired.

The great Judge, however, plain and direct of speech, learned, logical and full of statistics, facts and truths, had the confidence of the people. They believed in his constructive statesmanship.

Helen Channing was the embodiment of the ideal and was deemed far above the sphere of logic, of argument, of practical work and constructive power.

She was the poetry, the song, the spirituality, the thought, the truth itself. Such was the estimation of the world whose admiration for her was unbounded. But those who were close to her knew that her life, free as it was from any selfishness of thought or purpose, amplified as it was by a spirituality which enabled her to know the truth instinctively, was also directed by a genius for organization which would have delighted even her greatest ancestor.

And Alden? He, too, was a hero whose lips were hallowed with the fire of brotherly love and the redemption of human society through the application of Christ's Law of Life— the Golden Rule.

When Congress convened in extra session in October, 1990, there was nothing for it to do but accept the strong sentiment of the people as their unwritten law. But members of the House and Senate were as anxious to approve the sale of the estate to the Reapers of the World as the nation was to have them do it. So plain was the course before them that when the subject arose in the regular order it was unanimously approved without discussion. The administration was congratulated on its successful solution of the problem which had long perplexed the people of the nation and was urged to complete the transfer of the stock of the Standard Oil Company to the Reapers of the World without delay.

In less than ten days after the action of Congress was taken the transfer was made.

By order of the Probate Court and with the approval of both branches of Congress, His Excellency, Josiah Quincy Adams, President of the United States, in the presence of a large and distinguished audience, assigned to the Grand Lodge of the Reapers of the World Three Hundred Billion shares of stock of the Standard Oil Company, and with much ceremony delivered that and the keys of the vaults in which the stock of all the corporations of the nation were held by the Standard, to Helen Channing, descendant of the Rockefellers, Lady Harvester of the Reapers of the World, Exemplar and Exponent of the Economic Christ. And Helen, as she received them, spoke briefly and graciously to His Excellency and the assembled multitude.

"I accept these evidences of the Nation's wealth," she said, "in the name of our Lord and Master who came to redeem mankind from its sins. This I do for the Reapers of the World which now includes more than one half of America's adult population and which will include the remainder as soon as they can be enrolled.

"My honored kinsman, the illustrious Morgan Rockefeller and his immortal ancestors organized the system by which the Standard Oil Company acquired all wealth and all power. He died leaving this to the government on the theory that Democratic Socialism would be thereby accomplished.

"The government is unequal to the task because government knows no law but force and the Estate is now passed over by the government to an organizaion which, while it does not disturb society or the system of the Rockefellers, accepts it in the spirit of Fraternity and will infuse into its operations the one thing needful to perfect its greatness—Brotherly Love.

"As the sole representative of the family which has been God's instrument to accomplish much of this great work, I have been directed by mysterious circumstances to complete it.

"And now, dear friends, brothers and sisters all, allow me to lay aside forever the exalted character of an instrument of God's great purpose to redeem mankind—and take my place among those who, in an economic sense, are redeemed."

Helen looked down at the sea of upturned faces which seemed to reflect her own loveliness—with a smile of infinite joy shining through her tears.

The vast assemblage was deeply affected and could not restrain its wild outbursts of delight. In the midst of that indescribable scene Helen turned again to Alden Lowell who had advanced to a place beside her on the platform, as if to speak. But the people were beside themselves with joy and could not be calm. At last however, there was a moment's quiet and she spoke again.

"It is permitted me now" she said "to retire from the leadership of the Reapers of the World. At the annual election, Mr. Alden Lowell, whom I take pleasure in introducing to you, was elected to be your Grand Master Harvester." Then turning again to Alden she continued, "Grand Master Harvester of the Reapers of the World:—I now deliver to you the assignments whereby the estate of Morgan Rockefeller becomes the absolute property of the order of which you are the chief. In doing this I more than gladly renounce all claims to it, whether legal or moral, except as provided by the will of my deceased kinsman. My public work is now finished and yours has begun in a larger measure than we have anticipated. And now I ask all to bow their heads with me in a silent prayer of thankfuless which is too real and too great for spoken expression."

CHAPTER XLVII.

FRATERNITY.

The Master Harvester of the Reapers of the World assumed his place at the head of his order with the eyes of the world viewing him with all encouragement and great regard.

It was the law of the order that he should hold his high office for two years. Some of the great men of the nation believed the term too short, but they did not yet realize that the Reapers were merely a "holding order" in precisely the same sense that Standard was in its latter years a "holding company."

The Reapers did no business.

They merely held or owned the stock of those corporations which did the business.

They cut the coupons from bonds and collected them.

They received dividends on stocks.

Like the aristocracy of ancient days they accepted and absorbed all the rent of their great tenement—the nation.

Like Shylock they demanded and obtained the interest which capital exacted.

Like the trader of every age, they added profits to the producer's fair wage and covered them into their treasury.

But they did it the same way that the corporation always did it. In other words, their system was exacting, unyielding and omnivorous. But after the "business" had been transacted on scientific and business principles they distributed the dividends, the interest, rent and profits, just as the corporations did, but being organized on the basis of Brotherly Love, while the men and women received wages in accordance with their deserts, all received a portion of the surplus in the fraternal treasury as equal partners and joint heirs in the estate.

The Grand Harvest of the Reapers elected the directors in all the corporations. The directors elected their own officers and also appointed the manager who was best fitted to make the business a success.

The Grand Harvest was composed of delegates from the Ranges of which there were one hundred and eighty—or one Range for each one million inhabitants. A Range consisted of one delegate from each Field. A Field was made up of twenty lodges and, as already noted, a lodge was limited to five hundred members.

The Range had original jurisdiction of all corporations within the territorial limits which the Grand Harvest defined and the several Ranges selected the directors of corporations, each in its own district. If a corporation failed to pay dividends the Range appointed a commission to investigate and on the report of such commission the deficient company was either dissolved or strengthened as seemed best. But any decision of aid or dissolution was subject to the right of the aggrieved officers to appeal to the Grand Harvest.

This system made every corporation extremely zealous in its own behalf; for when a corporation was dissolved its officers were often reduced to the ranks.

The special concern of the Ranges was to utilize the labor power of the nation to its fullest capacity. If a number of men and women were unemployed, places were found for them in some existing corporation or a new corporation was organized and financed to receive them.

One of the most important acts of the Grand Harvest of 1991 was to declare the Standard Oil Company dissolved. In commemoration of the event the Master Harvester, in a notable address, spoke in part as follows:

"Thus passes" he declared "one of the most potent instrumentalities of concentration and progress the world has ever known.

"It was invented by the brainiest products of the commercial system.

"Those men knew that all corporations must eventually merge into one, but they also knew that such a consummation could only be effected by natural and easy processes.

"To force evolution beyond the understanding or habits of men must result only in evil and perhaps in total failure of the social system.

"Although the Reapers have now acquired the properties of Standard, we must be as careful and practical in handling them as Standard has been.

"Let us not make the mistake of supposing that all the smaller corporations should be dissolved or their identity lost in the Fraternal Merger.

"Each corporation is an individual with characteristics of its own. Each will compete with the others and the race for high honors and prizes will sharpen the conflict without endangering the material comfort of men.

"Under the dominion of Standard each corporation did its best because it sought the honors which would be bestowed on merit and success by a captain of industry.

"Many times more desirable will be the honors which can be conferred by the Fraternal Merger, the Reapers of the World, the order of Brotherly Love."

The first Grand Harvest of the Reapers of the World witnessed a tragic and affecting event. The Socialist, John R. Bristow, entered the hall while the Harvest was in session. Secrecy was now abolished from all the Councils of the order and so he made his way unchallenged to the platform. So venerable and yet stately did he appear that he attracted the attention of all and some knew him as being one of the most famous men of his day. There had been a lull in the proceedings and Alden, the Grand Master Harvester, while occupying the chair, was conferring with Judge Brewer who sat on the platform with him. The Judge looking up, remarked the approach of the old man and at once recognized him.

"It is Bristow, the old Socialist," he whispered to Alden. "Let us have him speak to the Harvest."

And Alden, appreciating the part the defeated hero had played in his country's history, arose and took the old man's hand as the latter stepped on the platform.

"Welcome, Mr. Bristow," he exclaimed. Then turning to the assemblage, he said: "Reapers, I wish to introduce Hon. John R. Bristow who will kindly favor us with some words of encouragement."

As the old man faced the Harvest he bent his head and spoke in a voice trembling with the weakness of age.

"Never have I realized as I do now the meaning of those words, 'God has His mysteries of Grace.'

"Almost a century I have watched the foaming, surging flood of years as it plunged headlong into oblivion. Half of that time I have watched it in silence, but have known always that some immeasurable force spoke from the tumult in God's voice of Thunder. I say I have watched it in silence. It was because I could not understand, but felt that some day it would all be clear to me. Now as I stand with my hand lifting the latch of that door which opens into eternity, I look back, so to speak, and see and know that in the Providence of God, all things make for good. You, O, Reapers! have solved the problem I could not solve. You are the vanguard of the second coming of Christ to this earth—where, in his kingdom of brotherly love, a kingdom organized on the basis of fraternity, He who might have reigned materially will reign spiritually."

The old man lifted his head as he spoke and the fire of youth seemed for the moment to return to his eye; but suddenly he was seen to stagger and raise his hand to his forehead. Alden sprang quickly forward and caught him in his arms as he fell. They sent for aid, but before the physician could arrive the old man expired, murmuring the word "Fraternity."

As for the industries, they continued to thrive. Even in Colorado the new order had become popular with the gold miners. They were not all willing to become Reapers but most of them did so. General Masterson was one of the most enthusiastic of those who favored the Fraternal Merger, as it was universally called, and he did not hesitate to declare that the time was not far off when Morgan Rockefeller's anti-gold order would be accepted in favor of the Reapers and that when all men became directly interested in the wealth which they created there would be no need of wasting labor in producing gold except for an ornamental and artistic purpose.

It was remarkable, however, how little the people felt interested in the political government. The new ownership of the Estate had made every man a business man, although the management of the business was left with the same skillful and experienced heads which had made it successful. But each man and woman was a partner so far as the interest, rent and profits were concerned. Each received his wages for his work and paid his dues to the trust fund as before.

One day during the holiday recess of the Grand Harvest, Alden suggested to Helen that she could make a Christmas gift of her legacy of one million dollars a year to the trust fund of the order.

"Why should I do that?" asked Helen "I will gladly give it to any cause but that."

Alden was surprised.

"And why not that, dear Helen?"

"Well, even that, if you really think I should. But I am sure it would not be accepted. The original Reapers will insist that no patron for their trust fund be tolerated. They are equal partners in that and prefer to remain so. They will never allow any person to contribute more to the capital of the joint business than they do. They believe that equality of burdens is far more important to maintain the fraternal system than equality of profits."

"You are right, Helen!" exclaimed Alden. "The mind of the great captains and the heart of the Redeemer speak in you."

CHAPTER XLVIII

A. D. 2000.

At the close of his second term as Chief Magistrate Mr. Adams retired from politics, full of honors. After the ceremony of transferring the Estate to the Reapers of the World he had fallen sick and for a time his life hung in the balance. The nation had grown cold towards him immediately after the explosions which caused so much destruction of life. His seeming loss of prestige weighed heavily upon him even after he had succeeded in relieving himself of the burden of the Estate.

While he was still very sick the national campaign of 1992 was begun. For the first time in thirty years it was contested. The people had no Morgan Rockefeller now to dictate their action in the political sphere and were inclined to take advantage of their freedom to show their disapproval of the crime of 1991.

The popularity of Helen Channing was unbounded. It seemed as if the whole nation awaited her suggestion as an inspiration from above. Helen became aware of this attitude of the people and so was seen but seldom in public lest word or act of hers might be misconstrued.

In the election of 1992, however, while the President, still burning with fever on what his friends feared would be his death bed, Helen spoke to the people on a single occasion. Her words fell from her lips with the grace and simplicity of truth and love and the great public recognized their purity and freedom from selfish interest, caught them up and repeated them over and over again as the "vox Dei" for that campaign.

As a result the man of power who was instrumental in ushering in the Fraternal system was reelected without even knowing that he was a candidate. At first he was disposed to decline the honor, but as his strength returned he took on new courage and on March 4, 1993, the oath of office was administered to him a second time amid the rejoicing of the people.

While the contest had developed some marked opposition to Mr. Adams, the nation accepted his record as a pledge that the government, under his guidance, would not interfere with the Estate. Men regarded him as the champion of a policy which his opponents contemptuously epitomized in the phrase "Hands Off."

Strangely enough the government was looked upon as an institution which was in some indefinite sense indispensable but dangerously in the way. "If only it would keep quiet while the Fraternal Order worked out the economic salvation of the nation" its whole object would be subserved. And the people were not mistaken in their estimate of what Mr. Adams would and would not do in the high office which he occupied. Again his popularity reached a height second only to that of the beautiful and immortal daughter of the Rockefeller race. And President Adams, carried by the tide of events toward that inevitable destiny of man, used his office to minimize rather than enlarge the powers of political government—and to enlarge rather than minimize the efficiency and influence of the Fraternal-economic system.

When, therefore, in 1994 the President desired Grand Master Harvester Alden Lowell to use his influence to make Secretary of War Brewer his, the President's, successor, that gentleman willingly complied and Judge Brewer was elected tumultuously and without a contest.

And now the year 2000 had arrived.

But in the presidential campaign of the year 2000 the people seemed to be as little interested as if it were a foreign event. The apathy was appalling. To those who had been prominent figures in the politics of the nation it was inexplicable.

"Is it not astonishing!" exclaimed Ex-President Adams as he sat with President Brewer in the new Executive office and discussed the situation. The ex-president did not appear very much disturbed and was the picture of health and smiling rotundity.

"The Grand Master," continued the ex-president "has promised to appoint electors in all the states and to instruct a number of voters to cast their ballots for them on election day, otherwise I really believe this election would go by default."

It was true. So little did the people care for the political government—the government of Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Jackson, Lincoln and Roosevelt—

that it seemed now a matter of no importance who was President.

What was the government anyhow?

The business interests owned it during the first century of its life.

The consolidated interests operated it from 1880 until 1915.

After 1915 it became merely the creature of Standard and later of the Estate.

Now the people had a system of their own and all that the government formerly recognized as a controlling factor of its affairs—wealth and the power of wealth—was owned and controlled by the people's system—the Fraternal.

So men were not interested in the President and his almost obsolete office—and were intensely interested in the more vital question —who should be the next Grand Master Harvester of the Reapers of the World.

Yet the great men of the Fraternal world—the leaders of the people—believed that political government should be retained. They valued its diplomatic service as being one which could best treat with other political governments. They thought it should bear the same vanishing relation to the new system that the Feudal system, with its castles and lords, bore to the Commercial system when the latter was newly established. As all the members of the diplomatic service, from ambassador down to commercial agent, were members of the Reapers and subject to the fraternal order and its business interests, the latter were in no danger from that source.

The Grand Harvest of 1998 had seriously discussed the advisability of organizing a Postal Company and requiring the government to transfer the entire system and property of the Post Office Department to that corporation. It was contended that it would be merely a paper transfer and not in the least respect revolutionary. But the delegates—amused at the simplicity of affairs which had always seemed so complex before—could not entirely break the force of habit and smilingly laid the matter over for another Grand Harvest.

The entire nation was now more completely under the dominion of the Reapers of the World than it was ever under the dominion of Morgan Rockefeller. The reason was evident now to the most obtuse intellect. In Rockefeller's time people did not feel themselves a part of the system. They maintained it because they recognized its existence as an inexorable and dominating force. They felt that the political system belonged to them. Although in truth it belonged to the economic system, the system of Morgan Rockefeller, and although it responded to that power, the people were not surprised that the government should do what they themselves felt compelled to do.

Now each man was a Rockefeller in his own right.

He was now a partner in the business and no man had a greater interest than he.

No member was permitted to pay more than his share into the trust fund and it was a rule which admitted no exception that the trust fund should be owned equally by all and the distribution of rent, interest and profits should be equal.

Yet no man or woman was in a position to disturb or interrupt the business system or its operations. He or she might act as a unit of the Fraternal system—but in the industrial department each was compelled to earn his or her own place. The man of skill, knowledge, merit and experience dominated the economic system as in the old days of competition and waste.

The objection to Standard in the time of John D. Rockefeller was that the objector was not directly interested in it. If he had a share of stock he became, in those days, Standard's friend.

In the Fraternal system everybody was financially interested and believed in it because he or she was a part of it—an active, recognized, prosperous and unencumbered part.

In 1995 the Reapers of the World repealed the order of Morgan Rockefeller demonetizing gold.

It coined in place of gold, an hour's labor, a week's labor, and a month's labor. Every gold miner in Colorado was quite ready to assent to the plan now, because he was a member of the Reapers of the World and a part of the System.

In 1992 the Reapers paid on account of the contract price of the Estate to the government Nine Hundred Millions. As this was in addition to the internal tax which the corporation paid it left a prodigious surplus in the government treasury. In 1993 the same enormous sum was paid as a second installment. It was evident that if the government and the nation were to continue to do business on a gold basis all the gold would accumulate in the treasury and the system would be paralyzed. The expense of the federal government was about equal to the annual payments, but in the interest of bookkeeping it was decided not to abolish the internal tax, but to distribute the surplus so as to return it to the channels of business.

President Jackson once disposed of a surplus in the Federal treasury by apportioning it among the states.

In the present case, however, the President, Cabinet and Congress all concluded that the best way to dispose of the surplus was to return it to the Reapers of the World which included all adult citizens in its membership. It was arranged in 1993 that the sum of one billion eight hundred million dollars which was lying idle in the treasury should be placed at the disposal of the Reapers.

In the years following, the payments and return were a mere matter of bookkeeping. No money passed either way, but the custom adopted has ever since been continued in force.

The result is that the political government is fast becoming obsolete. The Fraternal, economic government, represented by the Grand Harvest of the Reapers of the World, exercises all the power and unites the people so firmly that they act as one man and no human power can stand against them.

President Brewer, of the political government, has aided the Fraternal in his executive capacity by subjecting the political to the domination of the Fraternal in every way. It required a great man at the helm of state to direct its course into the haven of Fraternal Love, and Brewer's name shines forever in the galaxy of life's immortals because he filled his place and accomplished a great work.

And in this blessed year 2000 the daughter of the Rockefellers, beloved of all mankind, and idolized by her distinguished husband, Grand Master Harvester Alden Lowell, and her two beautiful children, Alden Rockefeller and little three year old Helen Channing, enjoys a peace and happiness that passeth the understanding of those who do not know how much better it is to give than to receive. But if it be true, as some contend, that her relinquishment of the Estate was a sacrifice on her part, she still remains unconscious of any other fact than that she escaped a burden which it was not her duty to assume. In her home the old vanity of birth and wealth and the hard coarse commercialism of modern plutocracy have no place. Her husband's growing greatness is her delight and pride and she is his adviser in all the intricacies of his public work. Her contributions to literature are in universal demand and all the world looks to her as the greatest living exemplar of the new system.

Twenty centuries have rolled over the steeps of time since Jesus the Redeemer died nailed to a cross on the Hill of Calvary. He went about doing good and taught men that they should love their neighbors as themselves and do unto others as they would be done by. In all the frightful span of those twenty centuries, as they are pictured by the Muse of History, it seems difficult to catch a glimpse of the true light of that wonderful life shining across the dismal fields of bloodshed and starvation which the military and commercial systems have spread between it and this year 2000. But this we know, that selfishness is death and that the sole blessing which mankind has ever received or can receive comes to us from that distant time. As we lift our hearts in thanksgiving for the spiritual grandeur of his example and teachings let us not forget that there was and is an Economic Christ also, and that His remedy is all that the world will ever find efficient. Behind the clouds of the dark centuries it shines full of love, full of grace and splendid beyond the present power of the mind to realize. But some day—and we hope soon—the clouds which obscure it will burn away and we shall see written all over the universe the golden letters which spell the only hope for the material world—

FRATERNITY.

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